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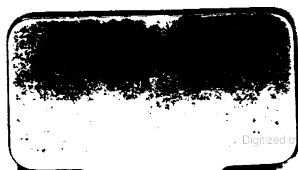
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PRIVATE HISTORY

OF THE

COURT OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

THE
PRIVATE HISTORY
OF THE
COURT OF ENGLAND.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

McSherman

AINSI VA LE MONDE.

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PREFACE.

THOSE, who, in the perusal of History, are fond of tracing the characters of mankind, and their close similarity, in every age, will, it is hoped, be gratified, as they scan over with an impartial eye, the following pages: they prove, incontestibly, that, though refinement improves the ideas and embellishes the outward form, and style of living, by all the soft acquirements

of luxury; yet, that the mind of man, ever invariable, pursues, with avidity, that one darling system of visionary happiness, premised him by the propensity of his nature and disposition; these propensities appear in different shapes, according to the versatility of the human mind. Thus, the moroseness which characterized the manners of some of our gloomy ancestors, is now changed into the deep thought of philosophy, and profound learning, or cynical censure on the manners of an age, *misalled, perhaps, corrupt!* because we must still acknowledge, that the characters of mankind are only altered, in a great degree, by improvements in knowledge,

and which, according to the soil that receives the precious seed of wisdom, grows up a pernicious poison, or improves into a fair tree of perfection.

The silly, illiterate stripling, hastily emancipated from the tuition of monkish ignorance of the fifteenth century, is, in this age of improvements, the half-learned, half travelled, trifling coxcomb of rank and fortune ; a compound of frivolity and presumption, a smatterer of languages, a connoisseur of pictures, operas and women ! The late ferocious violator of all the rites of hospitality, who murdered the husband, that he might possess the wife in uninterrupted se-

curity, is now the smooth-tongued, refined adulterer, who wounds the *mind* of the man he *calls* his friend, in the tenderest and dearest part, by making use of every insidious and delusive attack on the,—at first unsuspecting,—heart of the female, to draw away her affections from her lawful partner; while, at the same time, he pretends a disinterested regard for the injured husband. The drunkard of antiquity, who formerly swallowed a gallon of sack for his breakfast, and at each of his evening *liveries*,* drank a gallon of

* The *livery* was a gormandizing meal, eaten in the bedchambers of our ancestors of the fifteenth century, after they had taken their ordinary supper.

beer and two quarts of wine, is the only ancient character that luxury cannot change; for a drunkard at Champagne, Burgundy, or even "humble Port," is still a drunkard; and sinks the man into a level with the Brute: nay worse; for the crystal stream is the only beverage of the brute creation.

In every Century we find, that the people are the constant imitators of their superiors. If the Prince is the handsomest and finest gentleman of that age which boasts his birth; if his manners are the model of elegance, and his smile and address have all the charms of fascination; so his example becomes the more capable of drawing after

it admirers and partizans ; and if his own principles are faulty, they become doubly dangerous from the high eminence in which they are placed. If Edward the IVth. threw away the pure pearl of Savoy, in her prime and bloom of life, to unite himself to pride and bigotry's faded charms, was he a singular character? Have not other princes, far superior in wisdom and accomplishments, been guilty of similar faults? If princes and nobles in days of yore, were weary of their lawful and chaste wives, and wasted their patrimony and that of their people in the society of those women, who were some of them outcasts from polished society, do we not witness the same fatal pro-

pensities in succeeding reigns? Times, which we call civilized, when opposed to those of barbarism.

Man, who was never intended to be a perfect being, is continually the dupe of his own heart. If that heart is possessed of feeling and virtue, it may lead him into error, but never into actual vice: yet if once he suffers himself to be carried down by the stream of dissipation, he knows not where to stop: the retrospect of what he once was in the days of youthful candour and integrity, forms a dreadful comparison with his present vicious follies. Thus he continues his mad career in heedless

desperation: YE, who find the likeness of this picture stop, while time puts it in your power!

Happy the people, who are governed by a MONARCH, like the present RULER OF GREAT BRITAIN! CONSTANCY presides over his marriage couch; and a virtuous and beloved consort gilds the evening of his life with the splendid beams of her domestic virtues. The example of royalty, like a mighty torrent, carries all before it, and when a Prince spurns the marriage vow with contumely, and loves every man's wife better than his own, the nation, down to the lowest mechanic, boasts of an affair, with the wife of his friend; or the *little girl* which he keeps

at his cottage *ornee*; while the obscure, private gentleman of small fortune, takes the pretty lass he is weary of, *in the Hog*, to a *fashionable Watering Place*; and is supremely happy, when he has displayed her fine figure on the public walk, if the Great Man will once deign to notice him, for *her* sake! Does the Prince game? Oh! how spirited does the city apprentice think himself when he loses his last guinea, at a game of whist or casino!

Does the Prince degrade his fine talents and destroy his beautiful person, by ever sinking into the stupid and vilifying vice of inebriety? What a buck does the

wealthy citizen think himself, when carried to his bed, in a state of insensibility, from an excess of claret and Champagne ! and how does he boast of the heroic deed, the next morning, and with an important laugh, triumphantly declare that, “ the Prince himself, was never so d---d drunk, as he was, the night before.”

It must, in defiance of every innovating system or opinion, be truly maintained, that, “ Example goes farther than precept ;” and we cannot forbear repeating the affirmation, that human nature is, in every age, the same. The coarse language of some females in the fifteenth century, is closely copied

by the *equivoque*, however neatly wrapped up, which several ladies of high fashion, pride themselves in at the present day ; the low expressions made use of in the times of gothic ignorance, still hold their empire over the lips of our fashionables ; and display all their wonted energy in the slang of the turf, the barbarous terms attached to pugilism, and, the eccentric expressions, known only to the select societies of Bond-street and Lobby Loungers.

The gamesome frolics and Christmas gambols of our forefathers, where laughter presided, while the joke went round, and happy mirth supplied the place of sati-

rical wit, we shall only find exchanged for the more *polite*, but *inferior* occupations of *quizzing*, *hoaxing*, and, for summer amusement in the country and at watering places, laying every ridiculous plan to “*astonish the natives*” !!!

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* These, then, are the enchanting sirens, without whose
society there can be no happiness ! for whose sake we
ruin, we debase ourselves, and sacrifice all we should hold

hommes! tristes jouets de vos passions, ce vrai bien que vous cherchez avec tant d'ardeur, vous l'avez en vous, et vous le sacrifiez a des chimeres! Voulez miens etre heureux et vous le serez en effet. Jouissez de ce que vous possédez, de ce que la nature vous accorde, et vous n'aurez plus de desirs. S'il etoit possible qu'une lois defendit les femmes legitimes, les choses s'entreroient dans l'ordre. Nous n'aurions des vœux, d'empressement que pour elles; a leur tous les concubines n'essuyeroient que nos mepris.

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PRIVATE
HISTORY
OF THE
COURT OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

AN HEIR APPARENT.

Men's evil manners live in brass;
Their virtues we write in water.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN treating of ages long gone by, the pen, while it endeavours to be faithful to truth, should be ever impartial. The historic page is too frequently clouded with error; and though some facts are conspicuous to conviction, by agreeing authors, or well preserved manuscripts, all the events we read of are not to be too implicitly credited. It is not the in-

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B

tention of the writer of the present essay to speak of the transactions of the house of York, after it became secure by its union with that of Lancaster, in enjoying that repose from scenes of slaughter which had so long desolated the kingdom; but to give a sketch of the private life of Edward the IV. and his court, before the death of Henry the VI. till whose demise he could certainly not be said to enjoy the crown in perfect security, though there is every reason to style him **THE HEIR APPARENT** to the throne of England. His right to that throne, and the legality of his descent, have been so well treated of by various writers of veracity, that it is unnecessary to weary the reader with genealogical discussions: but this history commences at that period of Edward's youth, when the dreadful contentions between the two houses depopulated the

An Heir Apparent.

country, and bereft her of many of her bravest defenders.

A noble author has said, that "Edward's good qualities were courage and beauty; his bad qualities, every vice." This expression is too strong; for though vice certainly predominated in his character, he yet gave evident and frequent proofs of the goodness of his heart. But, misled by evil counsellors during his minority, he plunged into every species of dissipation; amongst which, inebriety, that disgusting vice, unhappily took the lead, and promised, long before his coming to the crown, to undermine that beauty, for which he was so particularly famed. By his precepts and example, he set at nought the principles of purity, and laughed at conjugal fidelity. His superb and elegant mansions were the scenes of riot and excess; and it is a maxim ever held by the

wise, in all ages, that, when the morals of the prince are corrupt, the nobles and plebeians generally follow the same fatal propensities, and thus the nation gradually sinks into effeminacy and consequent decay. In vain are exhortations from the pulpit; in vain may arts and learning improve; the pillars of the state are undermined, and ruin threatens to ensue. Thus, while the nation was revelling in excess, the heirs of Lancaster prevailed, and harrassed the people with all the sufferings of a cruel and disastrous contest. A noble ardour seemed kindling, amidst all his depravity, in the breast of Edward, worthy of the hero and the prince; cool and determined, he wished to appear at the head of his whole army; and confront the enemy. This noble emulation was, however, checked in its spring, by his brother the Duke of Gloucester; who,

fearful of losing that military fame he had already acquired, and which gave him the command of the army, or from what other motive is unknown, kept back the talents of the young prince ('till he determined to throw off the yoke of submission), and gave him only the command of a chosen set of warriors, youthful and prone to pleasure as himself. The discipline of these few troops left Edward sufficient time to pursue those gratifications, on which he set the highest value, and which he followed with ardent avidity; and, rioting in the midst of dissipation, his pernicious parasites smoothed instead of stopping the career of vice. Edward, roving from one frail fair to another, had, as yet, felt no fixed attachment. In the just expanded blossom of youth, "the expectancy and rose of the fair state," the heir of England's throne was immer

sed in that sensuality, which threatened the oblivion of every princely and manly acquisition that he once appeared in possession of, and which prognosticated the most auspicious omens to the partizans of the house of York, who looked forward with prophetic pleasure to his future exaltation. But while his fine person, his high accomplishments, and the splendid situation he filled, gained him every outward homage from his subjects, and all combined to captivate yielding beauty; the professed libertines of either sex used every endeavour and alluring art, to degrade the prince to a level with the meanest of his subjects, and to vitiate his morals as a man.

A tender Attachment.

CHAP. II.

A TENDER ATTACHMENT.

She seem'd
Fairer than fam'd of old, or fabled damsels
Met in forest wide by errant knights.

MILTON.

THE fascinating charms of Maria de Rosenvault seemed destined, by the powerful hand of fate, to snatch the prince, for a short period, from the slothful rust of apathetic gallantry; a failing, dictated by fashion, matured by vice, and which can afford only satiety, and give a precarious satisfaction in which the heart has no share; never leaving those soul-satisfying remembrances, which

may be dwelt on with real delight in absence, by the mere contemplation of an object that we sincerely love.

After a splendid tournament, in honour of the mother of Edward, a pageant was represented in the evening, in which the gay youth of both sexes supported the various characters of different nations, according to the *costume* in which they were habited. They were dressed as at a masque, but without wearing visors, and the evening concluded with a ball, similar to the present fancy balls of Ireland; where the ladies appear in different characters, while the native beauty of the fair Hibernian is not clouded or disguised by a mask. The prince had often seen Maria in the suite of his mother. He had noticed her in the public walks, and had beheld her with a regard, almost bordering on veneration. He made in-

A tender Attachment.

quiries into her situation in life. He found she was married, her husband worthless, and her beauty almost her only portion. He as yet respected her sad situation, and thought as little of bribing her affections, by pecuniary benefits, as those of the richest countess at court : but, beholding her performing in the pageant, her resplendent beauty was so heightened, by a dress peculiarly calculated to display her person to advantage, that the remains of every virtuous principle and every good resolution were destroyed which had been kindled in his breast, when Maria was the object. Unaccustomed to control his passions, and resolved on their indulgence, as they became the inmates of their earthly mansion, he determined on possessing the object of his affections, at any price. Maria de Rosenvault was the love-inspiring object of man's adoration ;

A tender Attachment.

either when seated at home in the garb of neat and tasteful simplicity, in the walking, the equestrian, or court *costume*, she was equally charming; and that, to her, fatal evening! when attired in the habit of a Danish Princess, she gained universal admiration, and made the conquering Edward her willing captive.

Lenity to a female peculiarly unfortunate, prompts the mind to make some excuse for this part of Maria's conduct. Charity and pity must plead in extenuation of youth, assailed by manly beauty, grace, and power; when a husband, whose conduct was of the blackest die, left beauty and elegance to pine almost in want, or, far worse, would expect her to live in vile dishonour, by bartering a person peculiarly lovely, for wealth and splendor. With a heart of the softest and most affectionate

kind, and which he had totally alienated from himself; can it be wondered at, if the pleadings of Edward moved her mind in his favour, and prompted her in an inauspicious moment to listen to his addresses? was it natural for her to behold, with indifference, a princely lover, endowed with every acquirement, the handsomest man of his time, and whose faults the partial eyes of the nation saw only as the effervescence of youth, which time and reflection might correct? The whole kingdom seemed pleased to behold the impression which Maria had made on his heart; they hoped that, by attaching himself to one worthy object, the horde of rapacious mistresses and evil counselors, by which he was continually surrounded, might disperse, and the prince become more worthy of that high situation he was one day destined to fill.

Maria performed the part allotted her with a grace and dignity that added honour to the appearance of a princess. She appeared as if formed for nothing lower than the character she had that night only assumed. The amorous prince made use of every seductive art and persuasion; and, from the partiality she could not prevent feeling for him, and from the threats and instigations of her unfeeling husband, she became the acknowledged, and for a time, the *sole* mistress of Edward. But what urged her chiefly on to this fatal step was fond maternal love, which ever held supreme sway in her well cultivated, though youthful mind; it was that pervaded all her actions; that pure flame glowed bright in her heart, and almost stifled every other passion. She fondly foresaw in the extolled munificence of the noble Edward, a safe provision for

her child when she should be no more; and, resolving to ensure such advantages for her, which might put it out of the power of her worthless father to bereave her of, she transgressed against conviction, and the love of the daughter triumphed over the virtuous principles that had hitherto been so strictly cherished by the mother. Unhappily deceived and ill-fated victim, who buildest thine expectations on the constancy and gratitude of man! he, who left the wretched Jane Shore, without ensuring her a provision to guard her from the extreme of penury in her age, who ungratefully deserted the noble Warwick to whom he owed his crown, will equally, with cruel negligence, leave thee also, "poor Maria!" but Jane Shore left a kind and indulgent husband, and Warwick was morose and ambitious. Maria's story was unparalleled;

and oft-times her smiling face, in the midst of splendour, covered a depressed and almost broken heart: the sad, though envied, mistress of an illustrious prince. It is proper, however, to introduce her to the reader before that period, which plunged her into a sea of trouble, in embarking on whose waves, she was not altogether inculpable; but which brought with it the wreck of all her earthly prospects of happiness, and which punishment, added to the poignant feelings of her lacerated heart, we trust, has made sufficient atonement for all her errors; errors so ameliorated by the finest virtues of the soul, which she so eminently possessed, that they scarce deserve the harsh name of crimes. Oh! let the eye of purity, while it turns the averted glance from habitual contamination and abandoned vice, drop a tear over the frailties of

A tender Attachment.

an unfortunate sister, and often to concurring circumstances give that praise, which they may perhaps think due alone to their superior virtue.

CHAP. III.

A VICTIM TO GRATITUDE.

Had some kind angel op'd the book
 And let me read my fate, my heart had burst
 When it beheld the ills, which one by one
 I have endur'd.

ROMAN.

MARIA DENBIGH lost an indulgent father in her state of early childhood. He fell, while gallantly defending the interests of the house of York, and left a widow, almost portionless, with one daughter; whose bud of blossom promised to expand into the fairest flower of spring. So far from priding herself in the superior and increasing charms of her daughter, Mrs. Denbigh beheld them

with a solicitude, bordering on sorrow. She almost wished that some accident, while it spared the form and life of Maria, might destroy those charms of face, which were so uncommonly lovely. The prince, arrived at manhood, had already, though in his early youth, evinced that proneness to gallantry, which made every virtuous mother tremble for a fair and unportioned daughter. His parasites saw and encouraged his inclinations, by every temptation they could throw in his way; knowing that to flatter the darling vice of one high in power, would ensure them that favor, which the man of real integrity can never enjoy. His counsels are too bold to applaud guilt or cringe to splendor; but the minions employed about the person of the misguided Edward, gasping for places and pensions, infused their baneful poison

into his breast, and taught him to believe that the daughters of Britain were but too much honoured by his licentious addresses.

When Maria had reached the age of fifteen, all a mother's feelings experienced the most agonizing trial. The small pox, and seemingly of a very fatal kind, attacked Maria. It threatened not only beauty, but life itself; while Mrs. Denhigh's circumstances were in so declining a state that, from the expence of this severe illness, her finances became, at length, almost totally exhausted. Scarce could she procure the necessaries of life, much less those comforts so requisite now, to the existence of her languishing daughter. All application to friends was in vain. She was obliged to suffer in obscure retirement, as the pretensions of the house of Lancaster now prevailed; and it was

known that her husband fell in supporting the claims of that of York.

A young man of the name of de Rosen-vault had formerly resided near them. A thousand little delicate attentions had escaped him, unheeded by the innocent Maria, and accepted of, as of no dangerous tendency, by the mother; for his person was plain, his manners no way prepossessing, and his situation in life, like their own, indigent. This exterior covered a cold, designing and cowardly heart. Cautious and reserved, it could not be perceived on which side he leaned, or which party he most favoured; but it since occurred, when too late, to these then unsuspecting females, that, when the House of Lancaster became successful, the fortunes of de Rosenvault increased.

Antoine De Rosenvault was of a noble Norman family; and verified the old

Norman proverb, that every one born of Normandy, is a lawyer from his cradle. De Rosenvault did not belie his country. His plans were laid in the storehouse of his mind, long before he brought them to view. He undertook no action, till he had well weighed the profit which might accrue to him. He was skilled in all the learning of those rude times, and had made physic and surgery a part of his studies.

Soon after the illness of Maria, he again became the neighbour of Mrs. Denbigh. His style of living was much altered. His dress, his domestic establishment, evinced a manifest change. Ease and comfort succeeded to rigid parsimony; but he affected to weep over the fortunes of the house of York, and imputed the change of circumstances to the demise of a wealthy reation.

A Victim to Gratitude.

One afternoon, an important crisis in Maria's disorder appeared to be taking place. Every trace of beauty fled. She lay in a trance-like state, not lovely, but even disfiguring death itself. De Rosenvault intreated to see her; and, as he approached close to her, he perceived that, though her disorder was of the most virulent kind, it was not likely to leave any impression which might destroy her beauty, should she recover. He ordered her a nurse. He sent to Paris for a physician of the highest eminence, who had formerly attended Queen Margaret. He watched over Maria. He spared no expence till he found her in a perfect state of convalescence. The mother adored him as the saviour of her child; and Maria looked up to him with the grateful affection of a sister. De Rosenvault now declared himself the lover; and Mrs. Denbigh,

A Victim to Gratitude.

who looked on him with a mother's regard, rejoiced in the prospect of ensuring a protector for her daughter, who, since her recovery, was more attractive and lovely than before. Her heart glowed with gratitude. She felt that sense of his kindness towards her, that she almost imagined she loved him; and before she was seventeen, she became the wife of De Rosenvault.

The first year of their marriage she saw herself the mother of a daughter, whose birth she bedewed with tears, and who was to her a perpetual source of tender anxiety; for before his daughter was born, the conduct of De Rosenvault was much altered. Gloom and discontent pervaded his features. Dark concealed schemes seemed fluctuating in his mind. He would stand gazing on Maria, not with fondness, but with scrutinizing precision;

and sometimes the sentence of "yes, it will do well—" would escape him; then he would suddenly start at his imprudence, affect to laugh, and to wonder himself at what he meant!

The house of Lancaster now began to totter. A fortunate battle for the Yorkists was fought at Northampton, where Lord Grey de Ruthin, who commanded Henry's van, deserted to the enemy. Henry was taken prisoner; and the house of York triumphed in victory.

De Rosenvault then became a bankrupt in fortune; and now resolved to build one on the beauty of his wife. One evening, after repeated proofs of unmanly insult and ill humour, he said to her, "What do you imagine, Maria, could be my motive for marrying a girl like yourself, without either a crown or

a shilling for your portion?" "I thought your union with me proceeded from sincere affection," replied she, forcing a smile—. "You believe it," said he, with a ghastly laugh; "you are mistaken, then; know that I am a ruined man! and that it is to you I look up for support." "To me? oh! cheerfully De Rosenvaut, will I do any thing to save you and this our beloved child from ruin; it is a dreadful word, it carries with it a terrific meaning; surely you are not serious." "I am," said he, with a gloomy frown; "repair to your chamber, lock the door within, and there you will find an explanation to all I have said."

The obedient and unsuspecting Maria hastened to her apartment, having received a repetition of the order from her wretched husband; and scarce had

she fastened the door, when from a closet rushed forth a nobleman of most licentious character, one of the partizans of the house of York, and who was possessed of scarce one good principle, except his unshaken loyalty to that cause. Famed for being the seducer of innumerable unhappy females, shunned and feared by the virtuous, and from whose ardent gaze Maria had often turned, when accompanied by her husband, she had met him in the different walks of the city and its suburbs. Fainting with terror, she sunk on a chair, and had scarce courage or strength left to ask him for what purpose he came there! "I came," said he, with an insulting smile, "by the appointment of your impoverished husband! and I am also well assured, by your own consent: nay, it is confirmed by your so carefully locking the door.

Five hundred crowns, adored Maria, I am to pay for the possession of your matchless person: tremble not thus, nor shun me with that repelling look; is it too small a gratuity? say, loveliest of women, what I shall offer?" "Oh, my lord," said the wretched and almost frantic Maria, "let me, on my knees, intreat your immediate departure: quit, I implore you, oh quit the pursuit of a devoted wretch like me; and while this heart continues to beat, it will feel for your generous forbearance, the warmest gratitude. That I must ever despise the basest of men, whom I have the misfortune to call my husband, is beyond a doubt, but I owe too much to myself and to the education I have received to sell my person to another. Oh, my lord! prove yourself worthy of your noble race; let this heroic effort make sweet me-

memory record, as she looks back on this hour, your conquest over yourself, and your clemency and justice to an injured woman." Unused to such pleading; shocked at the pallid hue and deep despair which overspread her countenance; the native honour of his ancestors shot across his soul. He raised the trembling Maria; placed her in her chair, and, bending one knee to the ground, with awe and veneration, as he would have addressed an angel, he said, "Be all you wish! remain in your spotless purity, sweet image of unsullied honour! and oh! may he who blights it never know the blessing of a virtuous attachment!" He then hastily unlocked the door, as if fearful of trusting himself, and proceeded to the guilty husband. "By heaven, De Rosenvault," said he, "thy wife is an angel!" "Ay, is she not?" replied this

monster of depravity. "Yes, an angel of purity, unfit for a demon like thee—I find her immaculate, unaffectedly chaste." "Oh, my lord, you know not the art of woman," said De Rosenvault, trembling; least he should lose the promised reward of infamy, "you should employ perseverance." "Hold, De Rosenvault, say no more; your wife said but little, but her looks,—the agonizing terror that pervaded her angelic form, will ever be present to my imagination. As to women, I know them but too well; but my acquaintance with them, I am sorry to say, has been chiefly amongst the frail and licentious. Here, instead of five hundred crowns, take a thousand, to preserve thy wife's conjugal fidelity, and sin no more against that emblem of virtue. Farewell—we have no more commerce with each other; whenever we meet

again, the first time thou shalt dare to address me, I will publish to the world what thou art—the pander to thy wife's dishonour, and the inveterate foe of the house of York !”

De Rosenvault shuddered. He knew not that his party principles were so ill concealed. He endeavoured to recall the indignant lord, but he was gone out of hearing, and he durst not think of addressing him again. The thousand crowns comforted his sordid mind, and he hastened to his wife's apartment. After a severe struggle with contending feelings, she had just found relief in a copious flood of tears. Seizing her hand, which shrunk from his touch, while he exultingly held up the ponderous bag of money, he cried out, “ Well, you are a good girl, and have played your part to admiration.” “ But oh, De Rosenvault,” said

she, "how vile is the part that you have acted! is it come to this? is it possible that a being, endowed with reason, —a man!—to whom we are taught to look up, as to a superior creature, can possess depravity that would disgrace a reptile? De Rosenvault, I intreat of you to give me my daughter, and let us separate; I can never look again with patience on the man who scruples not to obtain gifts at the expence of his wife's honour and reputation." "Chaste as LUCRETIA! heroic as PORTIA!" said the insulting De Rosenvault. "A lucky thought had struck me, to ensure us a fortune through the means of your immaculate virtue, instead of enjoying wealth at the expence of it. But you are determined to make me angry with you; and now, madam, I will let you know that you are my property,

and that the laws of the land allow me to do what I please with my goods and chattles, of which my wife makes a part; and if I chuse to SELL you I can, and will."

The depressed Maria shook with terror. She well knew the partial laws of her country in respect to her too often oppressed and enslaved sex; and, turning to De Rosenvault she said, "I have declared to you, that nothing should I deem too arduous, no situation in life too mean, in endeavouring to procure the means of subsistence for us, provided it is not inconsistent for honour to perform, or virtue to approve. You once had my tenderest anxiety. You shared it equally with our adored offspring. That link is now for ever broken; and the expanded wings of maternal love now wish to close themselves over, and shelter the fate of, my unhappy

child. For her I will do much. For her these hands will toil, though unused to labour; and even for you,—because you are HER FATHER!—cordial affection I feel for you no longer.”

“ Maria, hear me,” said De Rose-vault, with well feigned softness; “ your virtue has gained me a friend. Lord Bonville, who is departed, never again to enter these doors, has left me the sum of a thousand crowns to relieve our wants, and preserve your chastity. Pardon this once, I beseech you, a man, who on the brink of ruin, knew not which way to save himself and his beloved family from famine. Tempted by Lord Bonville’s liberal offers, I forgot myself, my honour, and all that was dear to me; and oh! had you known the agonies I endured when you quitted me this evening to ascend your chamber, much as you say

you hate me, you would, indeed, sincerely pity me." Maria, in the composition of whose temper sweetness bore the predominance, extended her hand to her guilty husband. Encouraged by her condescension, he pressed it to his lips, and, laughing, said, "I have an excellent scheme, dear girl, in my head, by which in a short time we may acquire immense wealth, and this adventurous night has furnished me with the idea. Your person is peculiarly captivating: out of this thousand crowns five hundred shall be employed in its decoration, which I would wish to be of the most alluring kind, and which may display your fine shape to the utmost advantage." Maria trembled, and was about to interrupt him,—“Nay, hear me out,” said he, “I mean you, when thus decorated, to attend all the shews and public places of resort near the court,

where all our young and wealthy nobles appear in swarms: some few, ay many, no doubt, you will attract: I will take care to provide you with lovers and admirers, with an introduction to you by means of a friend that I can trust.

"To what new insults am I to be exposed?" interrupted Maria. "Hear me," said De Rosenvault, "my friend shall inform me of their being at my house; I will instantly make my appearance, and threaten them with exposure to the Dutchess of York and the Princes for their insolence and outrage; to avoid which, they will be glad to come down with a good sum of money, which, when I find worth having, I will suffer myself to be prevailed on to accept." "Oh! vile, dishonourable proceeding! unheard of treachery!" said Maria, "never, never will I consent to such meanness—and why

should I frequent each public walk and place of fashionable resort, decorated and adorned, when our indigence must soon become known? Attired with splendor at such gay scenes, in these licentious times, I shall appear to court dishonour." "Your father," said De Rosenvault, with a sneer, "fell in defence of the house of York; they now prevail, for how long Heaven knows! dress yourself with tasteful simplicity, and present yourself before Edward's mother with a petition, informing her of our indigence, and request a support for yourself and child. Name not me nor my family, but call yourself the daughter of Denbigh, who died in defence of her family. The duchess is not curious; and you may gain something for a future day, while this we have will support present exigencies." "It was ever the wish of my beloved mother," said Maria, "that

I should carefully absent myself from court; she forewarned me of its dangers, and made me promise, as I expected her benediction, never to make one in the train of royalty. A prophetic feeling, she would often say, seemed to prognosticate my ruined happiness, if ever I joined that festive and splendid circle, where vice, crowned with roses, and loaded with wealth, laughs at, and spurns from her presence, the humble garb of modest worth and virtue."

"I have heard your fine speech with patience," said De Rosenvault, "and now I tell you, that as it was your *be-loved mother's* wish you should *not* go to court, it is your *hated husband's* orders that you *do* go, and present yourself before the mother of Edward as I requested; or otherwise attend to my favourite scheme which I mentioned before; for one or

other you positively shall do." Fully determined against that, Maria chose to present the petition as the lesser evil, but said with firmness, "Under no equivocal title will I go, De Rosenvault; as your wife, and under no other name, will I present myself." De Rosenvault paused awhile—"I must tell you one thing," said he, "as you are so tenacious of being unequivocal, our name, for one or two generations, has been altered in the spelling; the right name is Rosenwold; therefore, if you are asked any questions, say we are of an ancient German family, which is really the case—and—and—continued he, stammering,—“we settled some years back in Normandy, and, from some French nonsense or other, the name was changed to De Rosenvault—but pray say nothing about Normandy—and leave out the De—for it evinces our nobility,

it only makes us ridiculed ; besides, if you say your name is De Rosenvault, you may be asked why we are not in possession of the estates which gave us the title—they have been lost to me for many years—but it may appear to the jealous Yorkists as if they had been confiscated, because we adhered to the Lancastrians.”

Though Maria had never harboured a suspicion that her husband was devoted to the rebel party, yet she plainly saw there was some mystery attached to his fate in life ; what it was, was now of little avail to her. Why, thought she, should I commit a man, for so trifling a matter ? the spelling of the name is immaterial to me ; would to heaven, only, that I had never borne it !

In a few days after she presented her petition under the name of Mrs. Maria Rosenwold ; the daughter of the gallant Denbigh.

CHAP. IV.

THE DANGERS OF A COURT.

Amidst the roses, fierce repentance rears
Her snaky crest.

THOMSON.

AS the royal mother of Edward was passing to her apartment from her morning's walk, a beautiful vision presented itself to her of a lovely young woman, kneeling, and presenting her a petition. The duchess graciously raised her up, and, taking her into a magnificent saloon, requested her to speak her wishes without restraint, as she should esteem herself truly happy, if the ability she possessed, afforded her the pleasure of being serviceable to her.

Affluent ease, contrasted with distress, aids the cause of pleasure, and makes her appear more dangerously alluring. Maria, accustomed for many months to the coarse and unfeeling language of a churlish husband, felt her heart glow with satisfaction at the tender expressions and benevolent kindness of the mother of Edward. A luxurious and magnificent apartment, which seemed furnished with all the riches of different nations, where the most balsamic odours from exotic shrubs and flowers diffused their charms on the enraptured sense, while strains of soft music were heard floating on the air, from an open gallery erected in the garden; all these delights conspired to remind Maria of the very opposite appearance of her own ruinous home—a shattered fortune; an house, indebted only to her own taste, to make it appear in any

degree comfortable, plain and scantily furnished. The duchess before her, adorned with all that art, fashion, and splendor could combine; Maria's elegant exterior all her own, and borrowing no charms from her apparel, but those which native taste and economy always enabled her to modernize.

The mother of Edward was far from handsome; but her manners were a sweet composition of majesty, grace, and affability. Possessed of a penetration the most acute, she could instantly discover the gentlewoman, in whatever circumstances she might have occasion to address her, or implore her assistance; and every gentlewoman she treated as her equal.

She now ordered refreshments to be brought in for a guest who had so deeply interested her. Maria seemed lost in a

delirium of intoxicating, though momentary, happiness. The blooming young ladies and beautiful little pages that attended them at a slight banquet, made her almost fancy herself among the loves and graces. After they had retired, the duchess attended to the subject of Maria's petition.

“How many brave and gallant men,” said she, on reading the name of Denbigh, “have been sacrificed in this fatal contest between the two families!”—a tear of benevolent pity fell from her eye. Why should royalty be ashamed to weep?—is it that they wish to appear above mortality?—what principle is there that ennobles the heart more than tenderness for another? HE, who formed the heart, and planted in it its most exalted affections, was not ashamed to drop a tear over the grave of his friend!

The Duchess of York hastily brushed away the trickling drop with her hand: Maria perceived it, and, respectfully kissing it, she said, "Oh! sacred pearl of regret, that falls from the eye of majesty to the memory of a loyal soldier! more precious than all the gems that now encircle the brows of the successful heirs of the house of York!"

The duchess embraced her, and said, "I find, by this petition, that your husband wishes himself, to retire to Normandy, while I should make some provision for the daughter and grand-daughter of Denbigh. That I will most undoubtedly do—but a young woman, who has any attractions, is ever liable to solicitations from that sex, who, formed to be her protector, is too often her betrayer, A woman is never so safe as when under the shelter of her husband's

roof; except that husband is particularly faulty." Here Maria appeared much agitated: the duchess did not perceive it, or affected not to perceive it, and she continued.

"Humanity was never exempt from faults; angels, some say, have their's; but whatever disagreements may occur in the marriage state, separation, unless from very peculiar existing circumstances, ought never to take place; it leads a man into continual scenes of dissipation, and often stigmatizes the woman, whose virtue is perhaps purer than snow."

"But do not you think, madam," said Maria, "that there are circumstances which render it impossible for a woman of sentiment to continue to live united to an husband, where his cruelty has been the effect of system? not from the effervescent starts of passion which often break

out from the most generous mind." "Undoubtedly," replied the duchess, "there may be such cases ; I am not competently skilled to speak on these subjects ; for the union I formed was with the best of men ; and consequently truly happy."—She paused a while ; and then regarding Maria with tender complacency, she said, " I do not like the thoughts of your quitting this country to accompany your husband ; I feel an interest for you that makes me wish you near me."

" It is neither my intention, nor his wish, madam," returned Maria. " We must endeavour, then, to provide for your husband at home," said the duchess ; " change your dwelling, and come and live within the verge of the court. And I must tell you, my dear child, without wishing to flatter you, that your person is of that captivating kind, that I should

not wish the giddy young nobles about the court, should think you an unprotected woman." Maria gave a deep sigh to past events, that had so recently convinced her how little she was protected by *her* husband.

What is it in the compound of greatness, which, though oftentimes it appears composed of most costly ingredients, is yet found to be so very superficial? Pleased with the toy of the moment, regardless of promises, thoughtless of others; they, for a short period only, feel all that they profess. The dazzling scenes of splendour, the ever full cup of luxury, obviates the memory, and novelty, in whatever form, is acceptable. Thus, though the Duchess of York appeared fond of Maria; the honour of being always in her train, seemed the chief good she was likely to possess from her favour;

for her pension was very trifling, and even that, perhaps, she would not so long have retained, had not the duchess found her taste and talents so useful to her, which, now called into action, displayed themselves with unrivalled eminence. She touched the lute with uncommon skill, and her voice was melody itself. She was the writer of many of those sweet, plaintive English ballads, which have been yet preserved from the wreck of time. She composed the music of some elegant little sonnets, which were sung at the pageant and masques, that were almost nightly performed; in all which amusements, Maria generally appeared in a conspicuous character, and was thus drawn into continual publicity.

Gaiety must ever have charms to a young mind; and Maria soon recovered that charming animation and vivacity, so natural to the period of juvenility. Often,

the gayest of the gay, her volatile heart bounded with a delight, that diffused itself to all around her.

The Duchess of York lived but in her beloved Edward; this, her favourite son, appeared to her almost free from faults. The harshest name she could give them was, youthful indiscretions. Thus, the gay, the beautiful, composed the female part of her court, to please her darling Edward; who roved from fair to fair, his susceptible heart, or rather fickle mind, attaching himself to one, while giddy inconstancy deserted her for another. He would chat a while with Maria, but he revered her virtue, in spite of himself; and besides, he ever loved an easy conquest. The tender nature, however, of this unfortunate woman, was not proof against his blandishments: the subtle

The Dangers of a Court.

poison of love penetrated her heart ; unheeded, and by slow degrees.

It was customary in those unpolished times, in almost every entertainment, to introduce a fool or clown ; they were an appendage in the families of the chief nobility, and Edward and the rest of the princes, each had his peculiar jester. While Maria was performing the part of the Danish Princess, one of these clowns rushed in, his face and hands besmeared with blood, and shrieked out, “ Oh ! our beloved prince ! alas, alas ! our prince was, but a minute ago, as one may say, in perfect health, and now, oh now, our prince is no more ! ”

Maria instantly fainted ; and, on her recovery, found herself supported by her prince, with the most tender solicitude. “ Heavenly powers, he lives ! ” uttered she, with unconscious extasy. “ Ah !

yes, for you he lives," whispered the enraptured Edward. Thus, Maria's secret betrayed, the art of self-gratifying man was soon put in practice to allure her to her unhappy fate.

The clown alluded to the cruel and unfortunate death, which was planned for that unhappy young man, who had borne the title of Prince of Wales, and came with such heroic bravery to claim, what he called, his father's rights and his own; and such was the barbarity of the times, that the cruel *wit*, as it was called, was highly applauded, and the princes and nobles each gave a mark 'a-piece to the ridiculous and unfeeling jester,

Motley as the coat of the fool, are the events of this world; where the gay and the serious prevail by turns. Man thoughtlessly laughs, but has more often cause to mourn. A gallant youth doomed to be

deprived of his throne and life, gives birth to the laughter of folly. The unconscious fool is the means of discovering a secret, which undermines the virtuous soul, and imbitters each succeeding day of its sojournment in its earthly prison. So pass life's checquered scenes of good and evil.

After the fatal intoxication of temporary happiness, Maria De Rosenvault saw but too plainly the inconsiderate and frivolous character she had to depend upon. A superb household had been established for her, and, to flatter the pride of her royal protector, she was commanded to attire herself not only with elegance, but grandeur; to support which expence, she was informed a settlement of uncommon munificence should be made her, and be insured to her daughter. This made her contentedly support that splendid in-

famy which was become her lot. To the poor, she became the constant patroness, while her house and table were ever at the service of merit in either sex. The generous part of mankind saw her conduct with the eye of charity; and, while they deplored the fall of one, so formed for virtue, they eagerly sought her acquaintance as the charming solace of every leisure hour.

The mother of Edward, though she pitied her, could no longer afford her countenance or protection. And many of her own sex would shun her, not from principle, for the manners of the age, from the example of the prince, were too relaxed, to make chastity, by any means, the reigning virtue; but envy, while it sought to depreciate, was often obliged to acknowledge, how great her merit, and how extraordinary the circumstances

which led her into the path of vice; a path many of them had privately explored, and wandered in much farther than Maria. These *soi disant* virtuous ladies quitted her society entirely, from which much improvement in rectitude might have been gained; but they attributed their neglect of her, as necessary to the preservation of their own unsullied reputation.

Maria still loved her seducer. He was at that time, though very faulty, extremely amiable; perfectly skilled in the learning of the times; elegant in his manners, and his beauty in its prime.

CHAP. V.

MISTAKEN CONFIDENCE.

* Tu meprises ton bienfaiteur ; prens garde au serpent qui te pique.

ANON.

THE unfortunate Margaret of Anjou, after her defeat at Northampton, had fled to Durham and escaped into Scotland ; where her great affability, insinuation, and address, gained her many friends—and her promises and caresses affected all who approached her. Compassion to majesty in distress allured many to her standard, and, in a short time, she collected an army of twenty thousand strong.

* Thou despisest thy benefactor ; beware of the serpent that may sting thee.

This was little expected by the Yorkists, and the nation still continued its round of expensive pleasures, though engaged in a war with France, and scarce secure from dissensions at home; while Edward was giving way to the vilifying vice of intoxication, and sinking himself to contempt and ridicule, with LOVELACE, his darling associate; a man of noble family, eminent abilities, but of the loosest morals, and most famed for the quantity of wine he could drink at a banquet. He it was, who drew the Duke of Clarence into the fatal snare, which he might be literally said to plunge in, to the day of his death; for he would so intoxicate this prince with malmsey madeira, that he knew not, in those moments of madness, what he said or did; and, in one of those periods of subverted reason, he signed his own death-warrant, by consenting to head a

rebellion against his brother, though he loved him with the truest fraternal affection, and had no recollection the next day of the dreadful transaction.

LOVELACE, however, who was a disgrace, in some respects, to his noble family, stimulated Edward to drink to excess, and led him into every haunt of vice; and he might, with truth, be said, by his ill example and precepts, at the time the princes were in their nonage, to have corrupted the morals of them all, and to have sown those seeds of vice in their minds, which promised no fruit of perfection in maturity. Indeed it seemed to be as much the delight of this thoughtless and inconsiderate man, to train the princes to every species of licentiousness, as a virtuous Spartan would feel in seeing his offspring become every thing great and good.

The cause of the house of York now felt a severe shock in the battle of Wakefield, where near three thousand of them were slain; but the Lancastrians again met with a defeat near Mortimer's Cross, which Margaret compensated by a victory over Warwick, in a battle at St. Albans, in which Lord Bonville perished. This victory was no great advantage to Queen Margaret; for Warwick soon was in a condition to come against her with superior force, and gained a complete conquest over this unhappy princess and her little army.

As the English were now at war with France, Louis, the eleventh of that name, who was of an intriguing and politic genius, took advantage of our dissensions at home, and gained over, by bribery and other stratagems, many of the Lancastrians to his party. Margaret was profuse in her

promises to him, who fomented our vexations at home, and promised to give up Calais to him, if he would seat her on the throne of England. But he had laid his schemes to obtain it for himself, and unite it to that of France; and was engaged in laying a plan to effect an invasion of England. Louis, however, was in great dread of the undaunted valour of Lord Fauconberg; a hero, whose name was a terror to the French, both by sea and land; brave as a lion, indefatigable in the cause he served, he performed those atchievements which would seem fabulous, if told as the prowess of ancient knights; yet this undaunted warrior was possessed of every amiable, every christian, virtue in private life. While he and the Earl of Pembroke lived, Louis knew his designed invasion could never be put in force. Scarce could the most partial eye

of friendship find which to admire most in these brave defenders of Britain, and of the house of York; their deeds, unparalleled in the annals of history, ancient or modern, their name was a terror to every foreign power, and was hailed with rapture by every Englishman.

The English were happy in their administration. Lord Cobham, a great and intrepid statesman, has been aptly compared to a POLAR STAR, to guide the English to wealth and happiness; but Edward never appeared sufficiently grateful to *him*, or attached to *his* cause, to whom he owed his throne and life; for rebellion was awed by him, faction shrunk from his presence, and no crowned head remained in Europe that did not owe its dignity to the abilities and perseverance of Cobham.

A law had passed in Edward's minority

for the due election of members of parliament in counties. By these means the feudal system fell, and every freeholder was admitted to give his vote. This brought many of the Lancastrian party into the house, and discovered those rebel sentiments in some that had not before dared to avow them. LOVEFACE set himself in opposition to the virtuous Cobham, who supported, with Ciceronean eloquence, the cause of his king and country: and so infatuated was Edward with his false friend, that he headed, in a manner, an opposition against himself. These two parties occasioned great disorders, and elections were become a matter of real importance in England. The parliament began to assume great authority, for they had it in their power to enforce the obedience of the laws. LOVEFACE clamoured for an union between the

houses of York and Lancaster, an impartial division of property, forming a kind of republic, which might make them both obliged to the people alone for their possessions. This gained him popularity amongst the lower class of people, who are ever averse to the nobility, and he obtained the dignified appellation of THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE. Yet, while he was defending the cause of rebellion in the House of Commons one evening, he would the next repair to the prince, whom he affected to idolize, live at his table, and lead him at night to scenes of midnight festivity, to tennis courts on the following morning, and amongst the fair and frail city dames in the evening, who welcomed the inebriate prince with rapture; and though he knew not the next day where he had been, they were proud to boast, among their neigh-

bours, that he had passed five minutes the preceding night in their houses.

Poor Maria, whose mental qualifications even rose superior to her youth or sex, had matured and improved them by sad experience; and, in many leisure hours of melancholy seclusion, she stored her mind with wisdom's richest treasures. She beheld, with the keenest solicitude, the prince sinking beneath the character of a man, and she ventured to expostulate by letter to him on his faulty conduct, and the ill choice of his friends. She received a check for her presumption, as it was termed, and she determined to address him no more. Admonition was lost on him, though from those who bore him the tenderest regard. But self, more than self, her beloved daughter, gave her the most poignant anguish; her allowance was ill paid; her creditors were clamorous and

Mistaken Confidence.

importunate; while daily, and hourly, such reports of Edward's conduct assailed her ears as made her form a resolution to quit him for ever; and endeavour, by the exercise of those talents she possessed, to procure a scanty but virtuous subsistence for herself and child. Her unfeeling husband now no more importuned her, with either his presence or his menaces. Her ready money was exhausted, many valuable jewels gone, which he had extorted from her, and with which he departed for Normandy, insisting on a final separation between them; and leaving her and her daughter to struggle with a world, callous and cruel as himself. Such has sometimes been the lot of the strictly chaste and irreproachable female, and there self applause may repay, in the midst of the bitterest sufferings, many an hour lent to anguish; but when alluring vice draws

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the strings of the heart that is formed to be the seat of virtue, when no resource remains within to soothe the reproacher, conscience—happiness flies affrighted, and melancholy, resignation, and repentance, only stretch forth their hands to support the forlorn transgressor.

CHAP. VI.

A CRAFTY WIDOW.

Marry with a king!

A batchelor! a handsome stripling, too!

SHAKESPEARE.

AS anecdote is the principal subject of this work, it is to be hoped that a trifling anachronism, to accomplish that design, will be forgiven; and if, in the course of this history, we may be sometimes obliged to refer back to some peculiar circumstances, which happened in this eventful reign, criticism will not, we trust, assail us with severity. We are not writing a chronological history of England; and though the mention of wars and politics

must, of course, be slightly touched upon, yet the domestic scenes of the court and nation form the chief plan of these volumes.

The Earl of Warwick, who was Edward's real friend, now seeing the house of York likely to reign in safety, was desirous to negotiate an alliance, which might strengthen his kingdom, and preserve his throne, by the assistance of a foreign power. For this purpose he fixed his views on Bona of Savoy, a princess then in the bloom of early youth, lovely in her person, matchless in virtue, and possessed of every elegant acquirement. Edward evinced no aversion to this match, but shewed rather a more than ready acquiescence to it. What could be his motive for this duplicity, posterity has yet to learn. A beautiful widow, though some years older than

himself, had enchained the affections of Edward so closely, that it puzzled the understanding of both courtier and plebeian to account for it; for while he roved from fair to fair, and formed some connections which appeared to promise permanency, he was yet the willing and constant captive of Lady Elizabeth Grey, and had even promised her marriage, whenever he should enjoy the throne of England in perfect security.

Lady Elizabeth was a woman of consummate art and prudence. Her countenance was of the most bewitching beauty, and of that kind which seems to bid defiance to age; as her *em bon point* added lustre to the most delicate and transparent complexion. Her natural disposition was cool and serious, and the chief motive, it is said, for her insinuating herself into the good graces of her prince

was from her firm adherence to the church of Rome; which had received a shock in the reign of Henry V., by the purer tenets of the Lollards; and that great prince tarnished his glory by the cruel persecution of those reformists. Edward had little or no religion; but what he had, evidently favoured the creed of Wickliffe and his followers. Lady Elizabeth, to an half-finished education, united all the bigotry of those superstitious times. This lady was at the head of all the rigid Catholics; and trusted to the power of her personal charms, to her apparent wisdom, and that prudential conduct she, in effect, possessed, to convert the prince from his heresy. Her confessor, a man of the deepest policy and enthusiastic zeal, urged her on to employ every art to gain over the prince to desert the amiable Princess of Savoy, and to devote himself entirely

to Lady Elizabeth. But she laid no restrictions on his promiscuous amours; on the contrary, she rather encouraged them, in the double hope of her religion being established, by entirely detaching him from Maria De Rosenvault, who was a professed disciple of Wickliffe's, and also alienating his affections from the virtuous Bona, so that she might, without any opposition on the part of the prince, become Queen of England. Skilled in the art of flattery, she made him believe that her regard for him was of the most pure and sisterly kind; that, charming as was his person, it was his mental endowments that alone had captivated her, and caused her to forget that decorum and dignity she owed to her sex, her family, and the virtuous principles in which she had been educated. Nothing, indeed, would satisfy

her but a marriage with her beloved prince; and she covered her artful proceedings by every plausible pretence of heroic virtue. Among much rhetoric which she employed on the important occasion, historians record the following sentence:—"My liege, if I am too mean to be your wife, I think too highly of myself to become your mistress."

It is strange that historians, like some ill judges of painting, look only on the lustre of false colouring which appears on the surface, and examine not closely into the intrinsic worth of the piece. Actions, not words, are the proofs of superior virtue; and can we highly extol it in that woman who endeavoured to persuade the daughter of Edward to marry her own uncle, Richard the III^d? Such a mind shews itself to be more actuated by ambi-

tion in her resistance of Edward's illicit proposals, than guided by a love of unsullied virtue.

A marriage, without witnesses, hurried over by an itinerant priest, was, however, the tie that bound this lady, who was then in her wane, to a young and accomplished prince. They well knew that no churchman of respectability would perform the ceremony, as both nobility and clergy rejoiced in the projected alliance with the Princess of Savoy. And though Lady Elizabeth knew her marriage, from the want of witnesses, could not be binding, yet she trusted to some propitious moment, when, by her superior arts, she could blind the infatuated Edward so far as to consent to be publicly married to her.

Amongst the good qualities of Edward was great good nature to children; which

was ever kept alive in his breast, because it was aided by a tender compassion for their helpless years. This compassion he particularly felt for orphans of nobility, well brought up, but reduced to indigence. He knew they had to struggle with an unfeeling world, and, unused to labour, if royalty did not step forward to relieve them, and restore them to title and affluence, they must often perish; for there was no way for them to gain even a temporary or scanty subsistence, in those times, by superior education. Monasteries, which were patronized and supported by the Cardinal of Winchester, Lady Elizabeth's staunch friend, had engrossed chiefly the privileges of tuition; and of those religious houses the superiors were so venal, that, should indigent nobility wish to seek a refuge in a monastic life, as they could not bring pecuniary

endowments, they would either be told that the members of the religious order were complete; or, if they did admit them, they would be employed in the most servile drudgery of that monastery, which might, perhaps, afford them a shelter.

Scarce any one who sued to Edward for these unfortunate objects, so interesting on every account, could sue in vain. He beheld their intercessors with the regard he would a mediating angel, and could refuse nothing to them, in that moment of benevolent tenderness. The plan, which had long floated in the brain of the Lady Elizabeth, was now firmly fixed; but as the house of Lancaster continued, at times, to give heavy shocks to that of York, she waited till Edward's power should become more secure, before she put her scheme in execution.

CHAP. VII.

*A VALUABLE FRIEND, AND AN INTRIGU-
ING MISTRESS.*

Alas! how should you govern any kingdom,
That know not how to use ambassadors,
Nor how to be contented with one wife?

Well struck in years; fair, and not jealous.

SHAKESPEARE.

WARWICK, in the mean time, was negotiating, with rapid success, his embassy to the court of Savoy; and was soon enabled to return triumphant to his royal master, particularly happy to find that inclination, more than duty, was the motive which actuated the princess to listen to the overtures of Edward.

Warwick, the idol of all ranks of people, was almost sure of succeeding in any mission he might be sent upon. To a majestic and elegant person he united those manners which he could adopt at pleasure, and which he chose, on this important occasion, should be of the most fascinating politeness. He knew the art of appearing "all things to all men;" for, while his natural disposition bordered on the morose, he could, while at the court of Savoy, seem possessed of all those gay and volatile French manners, which, at that time, were so highly in vogue. He threw off his naturally repellent humour, and was the life of every party. He spoke several languages with precision, grace, and fluency; which rendered him a desirable acquisition at the tables of the different foreign ambassadors, to whom, in return, he gave the most sumptuous

A valuable Friend, and an intriguing Mistress.

entertainments; and which he was well enabled to support, by his great revenues, and the natural munificence of his heart. By grants from the crown, together with his own hereditary fortune, he was possessed of eighty thousand a year. This he employed, as became a nobleman, in continual acts of beneficence and splendid hospitality. We are assured, from respectable historians, that not less than thirty thousand persons lived daily at his board, in the different castles and manors which he possessed in England. Peculiar for his courage, spirit, and generosity, he was dear to all men, while the military adored him for his valour. To a fallen enemy he was the true British foe, ever renowned for shewing mercy to the vanquished. Respectful to a de-throned sovereign, whose imbecility and forlorn state he most sincerely pitied;

haughty and contemptuous in his behaviour to the luxurious Edward, who, though he wished to behold on the English throne, was guilty of a course of life that the noble-minded Warwick shrunk from in disgust. These good qualities were tarnished by an unbounded ambition, which, though it never raised his ideas so high as the crown itself, yet he ever wished to be the chief favourite of the realm.

His indefatigable ardour in the field, his stratagems in war, and voluntary hardships, have been well treated of by historic writers. One anecdote we cannot forbear transcribing, as it marks so strongly the cool and undaunted determination of an hero.

The earl, after being defeated at Pomfret, ordered his horse to be brought to him, which he stabbed before the whole

army; and swore, before he would desert his king, he would share the fate of the meanest soldier. To shew the greater security, a proclamation was issued, giving to every one liberty to retire; but, at the same time, threatening the severest punishment to those, who should discover any symptoms of cowardice in the approaching battle.

When so firm and able a support to the throne of Edward had succeeded in his embassy, for this foreign alliance, which would greatly aid the stability of that throne, the ungrateful conduct of the prince is sincerely to be deplored; and the mind naturally perceives how dangerous and imprudent, not to give them an harsher term, were the steps which he took in binding himself to Lady Elizabeth Grey. A moment's reflection might have shewn the thoughtless Edward, that

such folly must inevitably annihilate every spark of loyalty and affection in the breast of Warwick ; and that he, who possessed such warlike and political abilities, was likely to become a dangerous foe in the hour of disgust, a disgust which was sure to take place in a mind so sensible, and so deeply injured.

By a strange infatuation in a young and beautiful prince, Edward seemed possessed of a kind of mania for the charms of elderly ladies. He had now formed a connection with Lady Conyers, a lady who expected every day to become a grandmother ; she was, indeed, older than the mother of Edward ; and her youngest children were marriageable ; she had been extremely beautiful, and might yet be called so ; ever given to coquetry, she did not give it up, but was still aiming at new conquests.

Her husband, Sir John Conyers, happy in his rural sports, or over his bottle, suffered his lady to act as she pleased. He never controlled her. At length she captivated the amorous Edward, and was, for a time, his idol. And so lost was both the prince, and his venerable *chere amie*, to every sense of delicacy, that, we are credibly assured, he sent this lady to escort the Princess Bona to England, and actually passed the night in her company before the day on which she was destined to sail for Savoy, and bring away that injured lady from her father's court. He promised her also, on her return, to appoint her a place in the household of his princess, when she should arrive in England.

What must a nation look for amongst the manners and morals of a people, when those of their prince are so vitiated? A

philosophic stranger, who travelled to observe each different state and moral interior of a country, would be apt to exclaim with our immortal poet,

“ Is this the guise,
Is this the fashion in the court of England?”

In the mean time Lady Elizabeth was not idle in procuring those alliances amongst the nobility, which might gain her friends, and secure her accession to the throne. She made a confidant of the Duke of Buckingham, and informed him of her private marriage. This weak man, the tool of ambition, happy in any way to ally himself to the house of York, made proposals of marriage to Lady Elizabeth's sister. This was eagerly accepted, and hastily solemnized: and thus, through the duke's noble connections, she gained over a valuable confederacy to her party.

The coldness of her disposition made her look on all the promiscuous gallantries of Edward with indifference. The only formidable rival she dreaded was the Princess of Savoy, whose youth, beauty, and virtue, aided by the powerful motives of Edward for so splendid an alliance, might, in time, entirely detach the prince from his present frivolous pursuits; and make him, by the contemplation of the exalted conduct of the princess, become so in love with it, as to adopt a life of rectitude himself. He was yet young; consequently yet prone to new impressions.

But that want of foresight and penetration, for which Edward was remarkable, and which prevented him seeing how dangerous the offence that he had committed against Warwick; how mad, and how momentarily impulsive his marriage was with Lady Elizabeth Grey; rendered

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him also blind to that firm rock of happiness, which, fixed on the basis of the purest virtue, and an high regard to conjugal fidelity, would have blessed his summer days with delight, and afforded him the most gratifying and self-approving reflections in the winter of age.

CHAP. VIII.

PRINCELY RECREATIONS.

* Voilà donc, ces sirenes enchanteresses, sans lesquelles il n'y a point de bonheur; pour quoi on se ruine, on se deshonore, on sacrifie ce qu'on a de plus cher! O hommes! tristes jouets de vos passions, ce vrai bien que vous cherchez avec tant d'ardeur, vous l'avez en vous, et vous le sacrifiez a des chimeres! Voulez meins etre heureux et vous le serez en effet. Jouissez de ce que vous possédez, de ce que la nature vous accorde, et vous n'aurez plus de desirs. S'il etoit possible qu'une lois defendit les femmes legitimes, les choses r'entreroient dans l'ordre. Nous n'aurions des voeux, d'empressement que pour elles; a leur tous les concubines n'essuyeroient que nos mepris.

LE CHARPENTIER.

PAGEANTS, at this period of time, formed the ruling diversion of the great.

* These, then, are the enchanting sirens, without whose society there can be no happiness! for whose sake we ruin, we debase ourselves, and sacrifice all we should hold most dear! O man! the wretched sport of passion, this true

Princely Recreations.

An evening festival, in some respects, resembling our most gaudy theatrical representations; they were held chiefly at the court, and the houses of the nobles, and even the commoners and poor plebeians, to ape the manners of their superiors, had also their pageants exhibited. They became at length so frequent, that the actors were as numerous as the spectators; it therefore became customary to hire some of the most beautiful women, who were not very tenacious of their characters, some fine men from the soldiery, and a few needy adventurers,

felicity, that you seek with so much ardour, you have within yourself, while you sacrifice it to a chimera. Be more bounded in your wishes of happiness, and you will, in effect, obtain it. Enjoy what is within your grasp, what nature grants you, and desire will be satisfied. If it were possible that the laws could *forbid* a man having only one virtuous wife, order would be re-established; then our wishes, our attentions would concentrate in her alone; and mistresses, in their turn, would have only our contempt.

and were too idle to work for it. Those, for a stipulated sum, performed the part allotted them; if they danced and sung, they were a peculiar acquisition. At one of these public exhibitions, Edward was smitten with the person of a very lovely woman; her voice was harmonious, and her every action accompanied with a grace peculiar to herself. The prince, though then in a state of inebriety, which was visible to the whole audience, was quite enchanted with her; and, quitting Lady Elizabeth Grey, near whom he was seated, he said, "Don't be jealous, Bess, but I must go to Lord Stanley, and enquire something about that lovely girl." He soon returned to his seat. "By holy Mary," said he, "I must have her; she is a woman after my own heart, for she sings like an angel, and, what is better, I hear she can take a stoop of wine, with

Princely Recreations.

any hard drinking lord in England; LOVELACE and I will have a toping bout with her." "Charming accomplishments!" said Lady Elizabeth, laughing, but without any apparent pique. "By the holy rood, you are too sober, Bess," said the prince, "I must divert myself a little, with this *good fellow of a grisette*." "A *grisette*! my liege," said Lord Hastings, who was standing behind the Lady Elizabeth, "though you see her performing in this pageant, she is married to a young man of great expectations." "Better still," interrupted the prince, "you know Hastings, I have a great predilection for married women; but I beg your pardon for interrupting you,—I see you blush,—and I know why—you are thinking on Jane. Come, tell us who this enchantress is married to?" "He is the nephew of,

and sole heir to, the old Bishop of Clonfert in Ireland; he who is so immensely rich, that built the famous monastery of——” “Oh! burn the monastery,” said Edward; Lady Elizabeth devoutly crossed herself —“Come tell us, and let us have no long stories,—where is her husband now?” “The bishop, my liege,” replied Lord Hastings, “insisted on their immediate separation. Her husband began to discover her propensity to drinking, and readily consented. But his reverend lordship was so scanty in his allowance to her, that it would scarce find the little tippler in wine and brandy, and she has embraced her present way of life for support.” “She shall not want support; go to her, in my name, Hastings,” said the prince, “and tell her to come and sup with me this evening.” “To morrow, my liege, is the eve of the cruci-

fixion," said the confessor of Lady Elizabeth, who was seated near them; "and do you not commence your fast this evening?" Though Edward wished the old priest crucified himself, yet the overcast brow of Lady Elizabeth, who still held firm sway over him, caused him to desist from uttering the pious wish aloud. But, whispering Hastings, he ordered him to tell her, to breakfast with him, after mass was over, the next day after, and it is reported that this good Friday breakfast cost the prince five hundred pounds worth of jewels, which he presented to this new favourite that morning.

The above circumstance, shews how relaxed were the religious principles of Edward. Holy Friday, even by protestants, is ever held sacred, and kept with awe and reverence; and, in those papal times, it was entirely devoted to private

meditation and religious abstinence, and that the most rigid.

Hastings was the Lord Chamberlain, and possessed the king's unlimited confidence. Accomplished and elegant himself, he could not but admire grace and dignity wherever he found it. He admired the person of Lady Elizabeth Grey; he respected the fame she had acquired by her virtue, and thought the majesty of her deportment might confer honour on a crown; but he lamented her bigotry, and that excessive influence she held over the prince. He wished to see him indissolubly united to the princess of Savoy, and he judged no office too degrading, to detach his beloved master from so dangerous an ascendant as Lady Elizabeth. O virtue! there are, then, certain cases, when, in contradiction to thyself, thou permittest one fault to prevent a greater.

Mrs. Anne Mulcaster, the lady who had then captivated Edward, received the proposal with joy; and hastened to inform the depraved companion she then lived protected by, of this most fortunate incident. He counselled the exorbitance of her demands on the prince's coffers, which became at length so excessive, that the keeper of his exchequer declared them almost exhausted. And indeed he was reduced to the necessity of applying to the nation to defray the debts he had contracted with his household, and with various tradespeople. This was a degrading æra in Edward's life. The prince became the companion of a vitiated set of beings, performers playing in, and walking in, the procession of pageants, for hire; the most grovelling revels of stupid intoxication, with Mrs. Ann Mulcaster, clouded all his noble faculties, and sunk

the prince into absolute contempt ; who “ staging himself ” continually to the public gaze with the lowest company, amongst cudgel players and bruisers, far inferior to the gladiators of ancient Rome, whom a Roman patrician would not be seen speaking to. But he who claimed the English sceptre, would deign to call his companions and friends, those that even the kindred of these vagrants were ashamed to own. He soon lost, by this vilifying conduct, all that consequence due to his royal birth, and which his acquirements and fine person might challenge, had his station been ever so obscure, had he but shewn a proper respect to himself.

The depravity of the times was so great, that it is not to be paralleled in any preceding reign. That attachment formed with those who were bound by an indissoluble tie to another, was pre-

valent amongst all ranks of people ; and, palliated by the name of gallantry, or often called the effects of the finest sensibility, has been frequently practised by him, who has presented his plea in a court of law, against his wife, for the crime he perhaps has first taught her, "by giving her an evil lesson against herself," only that he might procure, by proclaiming his infamy to the world, those damages, which might enable him, in another place, to dishonour his friend.

A system was established by a society of dissipated people of quality, called the NEW SCHOOL ; which opposed itself against all the rigid decorum practised by their ancestors. Some of the maxims were certainly such as tended much to improve, while they modernized the outward behaviour ; to throw off superstition,

and check its growth. And many old customs, which were truly ridiculous, began to be laid aside, by the sensible part of mankind. But these disciples of the NEW SCHOOL, understood no medium in their continual innovations, and the growth of libertinism daily increased; while drooping morality appeared, as if never likely again to raise her head. Whoever did not conform to all the licentious tenets of this polite academy, were ridiculed with the appellation of the formal votaries of the *old school*; and though some liberal minded people, who determined to think for themselves, had adopted that charming medium between those manners and customs practised in the reign of Edward the Confessor, or during the Norman conquest, and the court of good King Stephen, and that of the Comus-like court of Edward,

yet they were rather regarded at a distance, with a degree of pity, as good kind of people, labouring under the prejudices of education, than thought sufficiently brilliant to shine in the circles of the great and gay.

The prince led the people ; fashion, in those gothic times, held as universal sway, as at present. Dissipation pleased all ranks, though attired in the garb of disgust, and though led down the dance of pleasure by the staggering step and trembling hand of drunkenness. Frequently, in the period of stupid intoxication, has the royal slave to his passions repaired to the dwelling of Mrs. Ann, and drove her depraved paramour from her chamber, which he has pitifully, though perhaps, not willingly, resigned to his superior in power.

Dancing girls, and those who figured away at tournaments or in pageants, were now the reigning favourites of the age. The Duke of Clarence had also his public favourite; he had ever evinced a great attachment to the pleasures of a domestic life; and, with his *chere amie*, who also made one of the hired pageantry, he established a kind of matrimonial *menage*, and became the tender father of a numerous offspring. His mistress was prudent and tenacious of his honour, as a prince; she judged it unworthy of those, who should support and be the standing pillars of the state, to fix their splendor on the ruin of the industrious mechanic, by contracting debts with them to support their extravagancies. Thus, though the mistress of an illustrious prince, she still continued to figure in her accustomed line of life. She had never, like Mrs. Ann

Mulcaster, been taught, by a stolen marriage of wealth and interest, to think herself above it. Her heart was truly maternal; and she wished to gain every acquisition of fortune for daughters she had by a former protector, whom she determined, if a mother's precepts could influence, should never adopt her public means of support. Her good sense taught her to see how little is to be depended on, from the favour of the great. She, therefore, determined to keep her talents in continual practice; though it is said, that not the lady's desire, but that the princely duke obliged her to continue the public exhibition of her person, for which he would alledge the following substantial reason—"My dear Elinor, I loved you as a public performer; your fascination will cease, as soon as you quit that profession." But we believe all this to be

only an ill-natured satire against the duke. Certain it is, his Elinor had his glory more at heart than he could have himself; and she has frequently been heard to say, "O let my protector be unlike his royal brother! may his debts never be defrayed by a generous public, or his credit branded by the prophane tongue of a mercenary plebeian!"

When this lady, who was called Mrs. Elinor Danjour, first captivated the Duke of Clarence, it was at a public kind of theatre, where she appeared to peculiar advantage. She could not be called beautiful, but there was something so peculiarly engaging and captivating in her whole exterior, that every heart seemed moved in her favour. She was neither graceful nor elegant in her appearance; yet all she said or did seemed incapable of improvement. In a word she was pos-

sessed, in an ample degree, of the true art of pleasing. Her vivacity never forsook her, not on the most trying occasions; from her early youth, before she became the mistress of the Duke of Clarence, she had lived for some years with an eminent counsellor, a man of good family, and who loved Mrs. Elinor with ardent affection. She had borne him two or three children, was faithfully attached to him, and was very strenuous with him to reward her fidelity by an honourable marriage. This, he positively refused to do, from family reasons we are led to suppose; in the mean time the duke made her very liberal proposals—an ample settlement, an elegant house for herself and children, and those of the counsellor to be treated as should be his own. She still remained faithful to her first protector; again she urged him, with all the

persuasion she was mistress of, to marry her. This he as positively refused. She then told him of the duke's liberal offers. His resolution appeared to stagger. "Marry me," said she, "free me at once from such solicitations, by becoming a lawful protector, while I swear to you, that inviolate fidelity, which no temptation shall ever be able to subvert." He declared to her, it was not in his power; that he never while he lived would forsake her; and intreated her to rely on his honour. "No, sir," said she, "I shall accept the offers of the duke; if I must continue a *left handed wife*, it shall be to a prince, and not to a commoner."

On this the counsellor urged intreaties, persuasions, and all the rhetoric he was master of, to dissuade her from leaving him; but finding it in vain, he behaved like a distracted man, and could scarce

set any bounds to his anger, when she took her final leave of him. Seeing him thus giving way to passion, she said to him, with great *sang froid*, "And was you mad enough then, sir, to believe that what I have submitted to with you, I could not with another? what foundation have you for forming such an opinion? Is it your exalted merit? That is flattering yourself too much. Be more just to yourself; and, be assured, had I been *strictly* virtuous, you never would have obtained possession of my person; and, since I am not, be not astonished at my granting those favours to another I did not refuse to you."

The Duke of Gloucester had also his mistress, a pretty little woman, but not quite so fortunate in the munificence of her lover as Mrs. Elinor Danjour; he kept her, in apparent splendor, more

from fashion than on any other account. Thus her house and carriage appeared elegant; but the cherished favourite knew not what it was to “fare sumptuously every day;” though, to pursue the comparison, it may be said—“she was clothed in purple and fine linen.” Her scanty suppers, and empty purse, became the jest of those youthful libertines, who wished to pay homage to her for the sake of military preferment; but her influence was by no means great; and often has this unfortunate fair one been confined for debt, and obliged to sleep between the four walls of a prison, while her friends have sued to the duke for her liberation; and he has answered—“I cannot get her released to-night—I cannot;—we are all poor now.—Let her make herself easy.—I’ll see what can be done for her to-morrow or next day.”

Princely Recreations.

And yet this woman had many who looked on her with the eyes of envy, because she was the acknowledged favourite of a royal duke.

The Duke of Gloucester's vice was not women. He was more addicted to that degradation, into which his brother Edward had lately sunk, that of drunkenness. For, though he was warlike, and almost every morning exercised his troops, and transacted the business of the army, he scarce ever retired to rest in a state of sobriety; for midnight orgies of intoxication, and high play at the tennis court, on those days he could spare from his military avocations, seemed his chief delight. Maddened by ill luck at the one, and his faculties all bewildered by the potency of the other, he has been, with difficulty, prevented from staking the fairest of his domains on his ducal and princely ho-

nours ; while, with his brother Edward, at the time when the arms of York prevailed at the battle of Hexham, instead of rejoicing with moderation and elegance, like princes, they would attend the executions of murderers, and the vilest malefactors. So true does a noble author write of Edward,—“That he would, on the same day, gallant a mistress, and inspect an execution.”

But the new school of fashion continued to initiate its votaries, and nothing *outrè* was wondered at. The blooming youth wedded superannuated deformity, for the sake of wealth. Young ladies of birth and fortune would sometimes escape from the parental roof, and marry the meanest of their vassals. Proud city knights would lead home a bride from the fish market ; and the learned, philosophic baronet, whose deep researches

explored the antiquities of Rome and Naples, was captivated by the Grecian form of one, who had, from a menial servant, become a lady of pleasure ; who, in an allegorical pageant, personated the goddess Hygeia, and at length became the idolized goddess of this knight of antiquity, who gave her the honourable and undisputed title of his lady, by making her his lawful wife. In this situation, amongst the wisest men of the age, she improved in dignity and learning. Lord Fauconberg was peculiarly charmed with her spirit and conversation; and that great hero, at his death, left her one of his castles in England, and other valuable possessions.

Though some of these discordant matches might end happily, yet the reflecting mind must see that the love of order is innovated ; that the tree of dig-

nity must fade, when so improperly ingrafted; and equality is the pernicious fruit, which it must, in time, produce.

Every one, however, saw with pleasure the marriage of Lord Fitzwalter, as they looked on it as the reward of superior virtue. His lordship had married one of the public performers before mentioned, and she was a proof that true nobility, which exists in the mind, is not derived from a train of illustrious ancestors. With a person remarkably elegant, with a fascination entirely her own, she remained spotless in the most dangerous walk in life for a female, and was singularly virtuous in an age the most corrupt. When raised by her noble lord to that dignity she so well deserved, though she never lifted herself up above her former friends, she preserved that true respectability which her station in life required. The

Princely Recreations.

coronet seemed to derive honour from her possession of it; and there was not one belonging to the court, even amongst the highest nobility, but what rejoiced in her exaltation.

CHAP. IX.

A REFORMATION.

Willing at once to prove
The certain joys that are in *virtuous* love.

PRIOR.

THE fate of Queen Margaret, after the battle of Hexham, is too singular not to be recorded. Flying, after her defeat, into a forest, where she endeavoured to conceal herself, she was beset, in the thick darkness of the evening, by robbers, who stripped her of some jewels she had about her, and which were very valuable, and treated her with great indignity. When the thieves were separating the booty, it raised a great quarrel between

them ; and, while their attention was thus engaged, she took the opportunity of escaping with her son into a thicker part of the forest, where she wandered about some time, exhausted with hunger, fatigue, terror, and affliction. In this wretched condition she saw a robber approach, with a drawn sword. Seeing no possible means of an escape, she resolved to trust to his generosity, and, advancing towards him, she presented to him the prince, calling out to him—" Here, my friend, I commit to your care the safety of your king's son."

The man, whose generous feelings were not entirely extinct by his vicious course of life, struck with this accident, felt charmed by the confidence the queen reposed in him ; and vowed he would not only abstain from injuring her, but devote himself entirely to her service. By means

of this man, she dwelt, for a time, concealed in the vicinity of the forest; and he at last conducted her to the sea coast, whence she escaped to Flanders.

In the mean time the successful Edward was revelling in scenes of pleasure to an excess of satiety, that defeated his pursuits after felicity. Ill health, from frequent inebriation and midnight banquetings, brought reflection to the thoughtless mind of the dissipated prince; and now Lady Elizabeth began to see her weakening power in the way to be triumphant. Ever mistress of herself, gentle and persuasive, she received his returning affection with that complacent sweetness, which rendered the personal charms she yet possessed more alluring; and her merit was much heightened by a comparison with the disgusting fair one he began to be completely weary of. She had



contrived to draw large sums from the prince; while her continual inebriation, when in his company, had produced in his mind the repelling of every inclination for the society of any other female, but her, whom he thought so mentally endowed as Lady Elizabeth. Had his penetration viewed only the qualifications of the mind with delight, he would have again sought, in the charms of Maria de Rosenvault's conversation, for the most soothing balsam to a wounded spirit.—But inconstancy and man are synonymous terms!—Lady Elizabeth was a newer object. Maria loved him with too much real tenderness, to call in the aid of that hypocritical exactitude which carefully watches it's time, can be all things to all humours, and unite pretended softness with outward dignity. Her allowance was ill paid; and, at best, so irregular, and by

such diminutive portions, that, at length, cast on the unpitied world, and almost friendless, with a beloved daughter to support, whose refined and cultivated sense, and whose height of figure, made her appear faster approaching to womanhood than she really was, induced her unfortunate mother to accept the protection of an officer of rank, who had served under, and been the intimate companion of, Edward, and the partaker of all his youthful pleasures.

Little more of Maria remains to be said. Over every faulty part of her conduct we would wish to cast the veil of commiseration and excuse. From feelings the most acute, by ingratitude from those she had most loved and most obliged, her sufferings became keen and poignant; the sorrows of her heart were of the most corroding kind, and threatened

a state of health, naturally delicate, and which was hastening rapidly to its decline.

Warwick had now become the successful negociator for the marriage of Edward with Bona; to whom the thoughtless prince was immediately betrothed, with every outward form that could make the marriage binding. The people saw, with delight, their prince emerging from vice; and flattered themselves that, as now the house of York appeared to be in a state of permanent safety, their Edward, whom, in spite of all his faults and follies, they still loved, would unite all his endeavours to maintain the validity of their suffrages, and for ever quit the scenes of riot and dissipation, which had formerly enslaved him.

Lady Elizabeth Grey, knowing no proof could be obtained of the legality of

the marriage that had been hastily performed between them, trembled at the prospect before her; for Edward, at first, appeared really sensible to the charms and accomplishments of his royal bride. Lady Elizabeth saw herself disliked, both by the nobility and people; her only supporters were a few Catholics of the most bigoted kind, and religion was by no means the fashion of the day: the NEW SCHOOL was composed chiefly of *illumineè*, who heeded not so obsolete a principle. Thus, her power apparently gone, she resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and, by one noble effort, make amends for her past errors. Had her conduct been equally blameless with that one heroic action of her life, she would have made all those, who were before her enemies, become her most ardent friends.

She instantly quitted the prince. She

gave orders, that he should never more be admitted to her presence; and sheltered herself, for some time, under the protection of the Duchess of Buckingham, her sister.

The faithful Warwick beheld, with joy, his beloved master thus relieved from this fascinating woman, and daily correcting his enormous conduct. The delighted subjects now congratulated each other, on seeing the mature man quitting the dissipations of the youth, and likely to become popular, more for his virtues than his conquests.

In the midst of these pleasing prospects a strong force was yet raising secretly amongst the Lancastrians. The parliament was divided in their opinion. Lord Fitzhugh, who was much more the friend of the French than of either party,

was supposed to carry on a secret correspondence with the enemy.

Interest was the sole test of the French monarch's honour. Treaties or engagements with him were of no use* ; no tie of honour could bind him; and he owed his sole success to all that deep cunning generally attendant on perfidy. Ambitious, dark, and dangerous, the more his principles became known, the more alarm they excited amongst his enemies in foreign states, and his vassal nobility at home. He had heaped the paltry insignia of honour on them; but, in return, had made himself master of their best lands and possessions.

It was the pride of Louis XIth to display his inhumanity in battle. In a skirmish, after having killed several of the

* See Mezerai's History of France.

Duke of Burgundy's people, the Burgundians requested a three days' truce to bury their dead.—“ My care,” said Louis, “ is for the living. Leave us the care of burying your dead ;—no need of a truce for that.”

This is ever the boasting language of a triumphant coward. When he is a conqueror, that one success makes him foolhardy to dash on with perseverance ; if he succeeds again, he becomes indefatigable ; and often, undeservedly, acquires the title of a brave and experienced general.

Maddened with success, and with the party of Lancastrians that had declared in his favour, Louis determined on the invasion of England. The English, however, were well aware of his intentions, and sent Lord Fauconberg, with a chosen force, to guard the channel from the threatened danger. It proved in the end to be mere

gasconade, and the French were obliged to strengthen their army by every means, lest the English should make a descent on the continent; and every man being called into the field, the Archbishop of Rouen was heard to say, that "Rouen would soon be left without a single priest to say mass."

Philip de Commines, a man of the most profound learning, and transcendent abilities, whose writings yet remain as a testimony to his erudition, was the head that guided the councils of Louis. As a politician, he could only be equalled by the illustrious Cobham. Happy for Europe had his heart, like Cobham's, sought the happiness and prosperity of nations, instead of gratifying the ambition of an atrocious despot!

To that bulwark of English safety, the sea, how much we must own ourselves

indebted, for preserving us from those invaders, who would else continually infest this happy land. Philip de Commines was very desirous of Edward visiting the court of Louis. The answer that monarch made him, has been handed down to us by various historians.—“Edward is a very handsome and amorous prince. Some lady of Paris may like him as well as he shall do her; and may invite him to visit us, not in a friendly manner. It is better that the sea be between us.”

In the mean time, fomented by French intrigue, the Lancastrians had formed themselves into a formidable party; expecting to be joined by Margaret, with a force sufficiently strong to drive the house of York from the throne. This rebellion was, however, checked in its beginning by the vigilance of the Lords Cobham and Warwick.

Edward appeared to be fully determined on quitting his former follies. He was less seen in the company of his associate LOVELACE. He ever loved Warwick; he knew how much he owed to his valour and fidelity; but now he appeared also sensible of the inestimable worth of Lord Cobham. He cordially welcomed him to his palace; thanked him for his loyalty in quelling the insurgents, and for his diligence and activity in finding out their various meetings and corresponding societies; and his indefatigable zeal in bringing so many over to the cause of York.

CHAP. X.

ENGLISH REBELLION, AND FRENCH
POLICY.

The king's name is a tower of strength,
Which they upon the adverse faction want.

Their faults lie open to the laws; let them,
Not us, correct.

SHAKESPEARE.

BY the advice of this great statesman, Lord Cobham, the ruling party shewed the rebels all possible clemency, and were sparing in their executions. The * most regretted amongst the disaffected party was the Earl of Worcester; a learned and

* See Hume's History of England.

accomplished person, born in an age when the nobility prided themselves in their ignorance, and left learning only to monks and schoolmasters. But his knowledge did not produce, in this hot-headed young man, the effects which naturally attended it,—a prudent conduct, or a softened heart; for he enraged his rulers against him, by fomenting acts of sanguinary cruelty. He had headed a party himself of those ruffians, who lawlessly used violence to whomsoever opposed them; but, being defeated, he fled, and concealed himself in obscurity.

A party of officers were dispatched to seize his person. He defended himself valiantly till he fell, after killing two of the officers, and receiving himself several wounds, one of which proved severely fatal.

He left a young and beautiful widow,

whose history is eventful; and which serves to shew how much the females, in those days, espoused the cause of the different parties, which then actuated the conduct of all ranks in the kingdom.

Clarissa Dalentour was the cherished foundling of a foreign prince and princess of high rank. She was brought up with their family, and received a finished and polite education with the young princes. The lady, to whom was principally confided the care of Clarissa's tuition, instilled into her young and susceptible mind principles of the most enthusiastic love for virtue, and a detestation for oppression and tyranny, under whatever guise they might shelter themselves. To a mind endued with the finest sensibility, those lessons were productive of some danger. So true is that idea, "that even virtue has its stated limits!"

The young and beautiful Clarissa beheld the events of life with a precision unusual at her years; and, while her own conduct approached to the purity and benevolence of an angelic being, she wept over the vices and misfortunes of others; while every child of sorrow became dear to her.

The distracted state of the country, to which she owed her birth, and the reprehensible and active part, taken in those commotions, by the prince, her benefactor, obliged the princess and her family to take refuge in England. The house of York, at that time, were in possession of the throne, and afforded the royal fugitives a safe and honourable asylum.

Ever alive to the distresses of others, Clarissa's heart felt deeply for the dethroned and unfortunate Henry. His party became dear to her; and she com-

pared his mild and amiable virtue with the numerous faults of the luxurious and expensive Edward, whose conduct, with that of his brothers, gave her an utter disgust to the house of York.

Her feelings were the result of an unspotted conscience; which, though it might sometimes deceive her, by its approval of an erroneous opinion, never taught her to disguise the real sentiments of her soul, which she expressed with an energy fearless of power, though with a sweetness and gentleness peculiar to herself. In one of those moments of enthusiasm for the cause which she imagined to be right, she sealed the impression which her beauty had before made on the heart of the Earl of Worcester. He was impatient to be united to a woman of such refined sense, and whose party principles so exactly accorded with

his own. His fine person, the similarity of his sentiments, easily gained the affection of Clarissa. Her royal friends rejoiced in seeing her so advantageously settled; and, for a while, truly blessed in each other, the happy pair forgot the contending parties in their own felicity. But the Lancastrians soon roused their leader from the peace of conjugal happiness; and a formidable body of the rebels attacked the Yorkists, and defeated them at the battle of Wakefield.

It will scarce be credited, that the effects of party rage should run so high, that she, the gentle and delicate Clarissa, renowned as much for the softness of her manners as for her heroic fortitude under misfortunes, should bind round her lovely and "chastened brow" a kerchief, dipped in the blood of the guiltless and lamented Earl of Rutland.

This serves to convince us how little moderation is to be expected, even from the best of a rebel party, in the hour of triumph. Yet, ever firm to the cause she cherished, after the Lancastrians were defeated at Mortimer's Cross, Lady Worcester still protected, as far as she was able, the fallen relics of the house of Lancaster, to the meanest of whose partizans she would rise and give place, with sincere and unaffected humility: but, even of the princes and princesses of the house of York, she would, with contemptuous dignity, take the precedence.

Though it is impossible to prevent our admiration of this victim of enthusiastic principle, yet we naturally feel much more for her in the situation of a widowed and affectionate mother. At the premature and fatal death of her gallant husband, her grief knew no bounds. That keenness

of feeling she possessed, made her only more exquisitely sensible of the irreparable loss she had sustained. The mother of the Earl of Worcester soothed her sorrows by every kind alleviation in her power; and with her, and in the bosom of that family who had acted towards her with true parental affection, the countess passed her widowhood in retirement, and in the cultivation of those rare and charming talents she possessed.

Lord Cobham soon after retiring from the high office he held in the ministry, the artful and politic De Commynes was now very arduous, in his advice to the French monarch, to sue for a peace with England. It was De Commynes, who might be said, by his profound genius, to govern France, and not a sovereign, who had little more than a military education, aided by a low and intriguing kind of natural cunning.

But Louis dreaded the dissaffection of his people at home, whom he knew he had tyrannically oppressed, and also feared a mutiny in his army, which he had not regularly paid. He was, therefore, at first, averse to following the advice of De Commynes, but at length gave way to the forcible reasons of this French Machiavel; who endeavoured to prove to him, how much more sure he would be of conquering the pride of England, and, in the end, entirely subduing that kingdom at his pleasure, if he would, by making a peace with them, bring the rich and noble across the seas, tempt them to purchase estates, and, by residing at them, disseminate their wealth through the country, and enrich the gallic dominions. Knowing also, how the English had, of late, given themselves up to every species

of expensive and luxurious pleasure, in which only they were excelled, in a very small degree, in France, he trusted that, by a sojournment in that depraved country, he might still improve that love of voluptuousness and public amusements, so as to dwindle the hardy English into effeminacy, and enervate them sufficiently to make them an easy conquest, whenever they should find their army sufficiently weakened by the slothful rust of peace. He then meant to urge Louis to make a pretext for declaring war against them, in the time when they should be the least prepared to repel his attacks.

The English nation, fatigued with wars abroad and party dissensions at home, readily acquiesced with the French monarch's proposals; and an hasty, and by no means honourable, peace for

England, was patched up at Pequigny*, near Amiens.

But scarce was the peace concluded, when the intriguing and treacherous spirit of France, began to shew itself. Jack Cade, whose rebellious proceedings gave so much trouble in the early part of the reign of Henry VI. after the defeat of his rebellious party, had escaped into his native country, Ireland, where he had a son born to him, who inherited all his father's levelling principles. He had, however, the advantage his parents wanted, a finished and military education; and had attained, by his bravery, the rank of a colonel in the army.

The smothered seeds of rebellion, which were sown in him from his childhood, at length burst forth. Dissatisfied with the

* See Rapin, Smollett, and others.

government which protected him, and for which he had once fought, he determined on the destruction of the king and royal family; while he intended to establish, himself, a system of equality, like that once attempted by his father. He chose for his associates, a low class of men, chiefly collected from among the dregs of the soldiery, who had been whipped for misdemeanours, and were ready to embrace every desperate adventure.

This weak and ambitious man, who headed these insurgents, was a fit tool for the French monarch. He promised him arms and money to assist him in the execution of his diabolical scheme; which was, to way-lay the king in his way from the tower, murder him, and then take possession of his palace, and make the

royal family their prisoners. But as there is no dependance on the friendship of the wicked, the confederates in this atrocious plot betrayed each other, on promise of pardon, and in hopes of a reward; and Colonel Cade, with several of the ring-leaders, were executed, as rebels to the king and state.

This was a severe disappointment to France. Melancholy, an unusual feature in that nation, lowered over the countenances of Frenchmen for some time; and they were so depressed, that they were unable to conceal their grief from the few English that were then at the court of France, but expressed strong indignation at the English severity in their execution of Cade. De Commynes, however, was not totally discouraged. He offered great rewards and high preferments to a needy

English officer to head the disaffected party in Ireland; but this proposal was rejected with noble and honourable disdain.

CHAP. XI.

EXCURSIONS TO FRANCE.

Now I would pray our *monsieurs*,
To think an English courtier may be wise,
And never see the *Louvre*.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE French king's minister proved himself in the right, when he judged with how much eagerness the English would repair to that court, where gaiety and delight spread every snare, to delude the unwary Briton, and empty his purse, while they corrupt his mind. Thousands flocked to Paris, actuated by the love of pleasure, whim, novelty, or mistaken economy.

Amongst these, LOVELACE was impatient to pay his devoirs to a king and minister he had ever admired ; and also to present his female friend, now his lawful wife, at a court by no means tenacious of, or famed for the virtue of modesty, or a regard to delicacy and decorum.

The gallic *beaux* were much surprised at the appearance of MRS. LOVELACE ; of whose person they had formed the most advantageous ideas. LOVELACE had, himself, a swarthy complexion, a black bushy beard, and, from an excess of living, appeared corpulent, and inclining to be dropsical ; but his picture had been so handed about in every nation, dressed in every character and *costume* that fancy could invent, but in which the likeness of THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE appeared so strong, that they

were prepared for all they beheld in the original. But as Frenchmen look much to the surface, and especially among women, they were astonished to see his bride on the wrong side of fifty, coarse looking, bad complexioned, marked with the small pox, and of a rotundity equal to a butt of strong English beer; not possessing one charm of person, except an hand and arm that might serve as models for a statuary or painter to place on the body of a Venus.

The beauties about the court of Louis, by no means set off the charms of this fat, old lady; and the most celebrated for the charms of her person, was the wife of a rich financier; and, to those dazzling attractions she possessed, together with the weight of her husband's coffers, which enabled him to lend sums to government, she owed her free accession to the court

of the haughty and imperious Louis XI. This pretty lady would maliciously place herself at all public scenes of diversion, by the side of **Mrs. LOVELACE**; that she might serve her as a foil, and, with true French coquetry, inspire the gay young Frenchmen with ideas of saying smart things and uttering elegant phrases, of complimentary comparison, advantageous to herself, but highly detrimental to the figure of the celebrated **Mrs. LOVE-LACE**.

The French began to form a very poor idea of English beauty; for while the ladies who composed the court of Louis, were dressed with that studied voluptuousness, which discovered every charm to advantage, the English ladies appeared in their large ruffs, close concealed attractions, and full gowns. This gained them the appellation of "English packets,"

loaded with silk and muslin, of true british manufacture, never seen in France Before! But every one admired the Countess of Devonshire, who, though no longer young, it was easily perceived, had possessed, and still retained, in an eminent degree, that charming fascination, so superior to correct beauty. The *bonne vivante*, the Countess of Westmoreland, eagerly adopted every French fashion. She had been indefatigable in marrying her daughters to advantage; two were wedded to dukes, one to a marquis, and the fourth to a wealthy baronet. She was herself still a fine woman, and her *em bon point* had not the clumsiness of that of MRS. LOVELACE. She therefore bared her shoulders *a la sauvage*, like the gay and exquisitely formed wife of the minister of the marine. She uncovered her round arms in imita-

tion of all the white-armed gallic nymphs, who hovered round the court; and from the coif, the 'kerchief, or beads, that confined her hair, she would draw out the straggling curls, and teach them to float on her cheek, like the luxuriant locks of the fair *financiere*. Having long been celebrated for imbibing the juice of the "tuscan grape," she needed not the aid of French *rouge* to adorn her rosy countenance.

She paid indefatigable court to Louis; and though her house, and those of all the noblemen, who had married her daughters, must stand on the basis of their loyalty to the cause of York, she was, nevertheless, a firm friend to the Lancastrian party, and of course to Queen Margaret, whom she told one evening, in a large assembly, that she hoped to see her, in the company of

Louis, eating their next christmas dinner in the palace of the tower of London !

France, was, at this time, crowded with English nobility ; scarce a duke, earl, or marquis was left in England. The half gentry aped their superiors, and saved up a little money, sufficient to procure them an excursion to this land of fancied delights. After two or three months sojournment there, these came home, a discredit to the country they had visited, and the standing jest of their own. They pretended to forget the name of their own English coin, and could speak of nothing but *sous*, *livres*, and *louis d'ors*, to the astonishment of the tradesmen they were trafficking with ; and smattered their *outrè* and misplaced French sentences in every company which they knew could not understand the language. The needy and wretched adven-

turer, who, through extravagance or constant indigence, had but a trifling or precarious income, hastily fled to France, which he fondly imagined was the land of riches, or where he could procure food and raiment for a mere song. Wretchedly deceived, he saw his folly too late; and, obliged to remain in a foreign country, where he could be hardly said to exist, he was compelled to labour hard for a livelihood, or desert his lawful king, by joining in the plots of the worthless ruler of France, who was using all his endeavours to harass and distress this country. But even then the adventurer's golden prospects ended in a dream; the wary Frenchman, afraid to trust him, and knowing his principles to be dictated more by necessity than a love for the cause of France, rewarded him with half confidence, and but very scanty emolu-

ments for his treachery; loving the "treason, but hating the traitor."

The leading ladies in this gallic excursion, the Countesses of Devonshire and Westmoreland, were eager to repair home to display their acquirements in French fashions, and disseminate some novel system in the new school of elegance and reform.

Before they quitted France, Lady Westmoreland cordially shook Louis by the hand, thanked him for all the civilities he had shewn her, and repeated her wish of seeing him enter London, in triumph. But Lord Hastings, who heard her, with much warmth, reproved her for her want of loyalty to his master. "My good Lord Chamberlain," said the countess, "I know your office. Close at the ear of your royal master, you act the part of a tell-tale, and often regale him, with some

scandalous anecdote, at the expence of your friends. Tell him now, if you please, all I have said; I value neither your master nor you."

The countess of Devonshire sensibly reproved her for the acrimony of her expressions to Lord Hastings, and hurried her away to the house of the rich financier's wife, to give her a pressing and cordial invitation to England; which this fair daughter of a dancing girl; promised to do her the honour of accepting.

We complain, in this our day, of the little distinction that is observed in the conduct of the high born and anciently titled nobility, with the *nouveau riche*, who may chance to be the direct offspring of the very lowest class. Alas! "there is nothing new under the sun." Warwick was the last of those English barons, whose ancient rights of birth,

held even the crown in subjection. He stood alone in his high dignity, and the equalizing system was every day gaining ground.

Equality owes its origin, more to licentiousness, than to humility. The king's once cherished favourite, Jane Shore, was countenanced by almost the whole of the nobility, because she was Edward's beautiful mistress, and because she had, at one time, unbounded influence over him; not on account of her being free from censure, except in that one faulty connexion, or of her being in every other respect, a woman of superior merit and excellence. No;—the new school had taught them, to look over the *indiscretions*, as they gently termed them, of a married woman with a favoured lover. But had the deluded Jane not lived in splendor, the chosen sultana of a great

and powerful prince, the high-born lady would have disdained to hold a minute's conversation with the humble wife of a goldsmith, had she been ever so faithful to virtue or to her marriage vows.

Edward, just before he ratified his engagements with the Princess of Savoy, when he was the fixed and sole admirer of Lady Elizabeth Grey, was determined to part with every mistress to whom he had been before devoted; and the affectionate Jane Shore was destined to follow the number of those, whom he had already cast off from his heart and protection.

No female, rising from so obscure a situation, has, we believe, been more spoken of, by different historians, than this unfortunate woman. Her story, in some respects, bears a similarity to that of Maria De Rosenvault; like her, well educated, and like her, she possessed a

mind formed, by nature, to be the throne of virtue.

Born of poor, but respectable parents, she was married, early in life, to a wealthy citizen; where interest on the parents' side, more than inclination on the part of Jane, was consulted in the marriage. She had cherished in her youthful breast a dangerous passion, which looked to no lower object than the princely Edward; and when assailed by him, with all that art and persuasion he was master of, she forgot her duty, and yielded to his solicitations. The other virtues, which, however, she still possessed, rendered her respectable, even in the eyes of the most rigidly virtuous. For all the use she made of her ascendancy over Edward, was to promote in him acts of beneficence, to oppose slander, even when it attacked her greatest enemies, and to relieve in-

digence. These good offices were the generous dictates of her heart; nor would she accept a present, or listen to the offers of reciprocal services.

The ingratitude of those who had long been protected by her, and feasted at her expence, forsook her in the hour of distress, and when the sun of royal favour had ceased to shine upon her. Had the generous Hastings lived, she would never have known the want of a friend. His end is too well known to find a place in this history, as it also happened after the demise of Edward. He had been long the unknown admirer of Jane Shore, even before her connexion with Edward; and, next to the prince, no man was more handsome, more elegant, or more capable, by the gallantry of his manners, and tenderness of his heart, to succeed with the fair, especially in a court famed for

gallantry, where every one had some tender attachment.

It has been often remarked that Lady Elizabeth Grey's pretended regard for Edward, was prompted chiefly by ambition. This may be well perceived, as she was entirely free from that anxiety, styled jealousy; which is generally inseparable from true love, which never can bear a rival in its privileges. But Lady Elizabeth lived on terms of the greatest intimacy with Mrs. Shore. Jane, it is true, like her powerful rival, was bigoted to the catholic religion, and Edward often used to say, she was never out of church; to which sacred place, and to every public amusement, Hastings was her constant shadow, when his duties, as Lord Chamberlain, permitted him those leisure moments. He followed her footsteps with delight, and lived upon her smiles.

When Edward ceased to be enamoured of a variety of females, and attached himself to Lady Elizabeth alone, Jane experienced that keen and corroding anguish of the heart, which, losing the affections of that it most loves, flies naturally to unbosom its griefs to some chosen friend.* Her Edward had become totally estranged from her; if he deserted her, she had no where to shelter herself. Her generous soul had thought not of ensuring any future fortune for the hour of distress. Hastings saw her mind struggling with misfortune, and joyfully stepped forward to relieve it. He had, in the wildness of youth, attached himself to a Mrs. Alicia Blount, who had formerly been the kind and confidential friend of Jane; but, seeing

* Spelman and other historians affirm, that Jane Shore lived with Lord Hastings as his mistress, after being deserted by Edward IV.

how deeply she had captivated Hastings, forsook her entirely, nor could this hapless woman command a shilling from one of those numerous beings, who had formerly been established in all the comforts of life through her bounty.

Gratitude, together with the constant custom of disclosing her sorrows to Lord Hastings, caused her to feel for him a more tender and attached confidence. Edward perceived it; and one day, desiring to speak with Hastings, in private, he said to him, "I perceive you love my mistress, Jane Shore." The confused earl blushed, and, in great agitation, stammered out, "Pardon me, my liege—" "Nay, man, deny it not," said Edward, "I assure you, it affords me the sincerest pleasure; for I think my praying mistress would rather support herself by the Lord Chamberlain's

staff, than lean entirely on that of a devout pilgrim, bound for Loretto! So take her, my good Lord Chamberlain; and may you be only as happy with her as I have been: for, see, Lady Elizabeth is coming, and to her I am solely riveted for the present: for—Heigho!—you know, my dear fellow, I am about to bind myself for ever by those public and solemn ties, that the throne, the policy of my state, and my own dignity, require of me. Heaven grant I may be able to love my Princess!—but oh, William, my friend, she never can be dear to this heart, like my adored Elizabeth.”

Hastings made no reply, but could not help mentally exclaiming, “Oh that you were not thus enchained! that to the gentle Jane you would rather devote yourself, sooner than to one who seeks only her own aggrandizement. Let her I love be

for ever lost to me, and may Hastings alone be the victim of disappointed love, a willing sacrifice to the glory and happiness of his royal master !”

In a few days after this interview with Hastings, Edward sent for Jane to his apartment.—“ My dear Jane,” said he, “ we must part.”

“ Alas ! my Lord,” said she, bursting into tears.

“ Hear me,” said Edward. “ Be assured, I shall ever regard you ; but I am married ; and I have vowed, before God, that to my wife alone will I devote myself.”

This was undoubtedly an *equivoque* on the part of Edward, and might be taken either as applicable to his present engagement with Lady Elizabeth, or the ties that bound him to the Princess of Savoy.

“ Hastings loves you,” continued he ;

“he is the best and truest of subjects, and the worthiest among men. Take this ring—wear it for my sake. My dear Jane, my finances are very low; I can do nothing for you; but Hastings is wealthy and generous, and will protect you as you deserve. Farewell;—believe me ever your friend.”

It was contrived, on her departure, that Hastings should throw himself in her way. Dangerous situation! when the heart, softened by grief, experiences a kindling attachment. Bitter were the tears she shed, it is true; but they fell on the bosom of Hastings. Dried by the hand of tenderness and benevolence, they soon ceased to flow. Her munificent lover prevented every wish ere she had well formed it; he gave her opportunities and the means of relieving the indigent and oppressed;—the greatest pleasure he could

afford her generous heart ; and remained the fond and honourable protector of this misguided but amiable female ; till his premature and tragical death left her to endure many succeeding years of penury, and to close her life under all the horrors of complicated distress.

CHAP. XII.

*A SHORT PEACE WITH A TREACHEROUS
ENEMY.*

Every man's conscience is a thousand swords,
To fight against a blood-stain'd homicide.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE beautiful wife of the Parisian financier hastened to perform her promise of paying a visit to England; and, soon after the departure of the belles of nobility from Paris, this celebrated lady arrived at the court of London.

While her soft and attractive charms influenced Englishmen in her favour, they

most of them gave the palm of superiority to the native beauties of their own island. Whatever innovations fashion may produce, yet modesty ever will be the peculiar charm of Britannia's daughters. They know not how to divest themselves entirely of this endearing quality; the faint relics of it will appear in those who have professionally laid it aside; and, however the gay female, who lives in reputation, may throw off the outward garment, in compliance with ridiculous custom, an overspreading blush and a downcast eye shew, that the mind of an English woman is incapable of casting off its inward veil of purity.

Whatever the dissipation of a depraved court may allow, or whatever free ideas the fashionable and high-born women of quality may adopt, which, in teaching her to cast off vulgar prejudices, too often

cause her to lay aside the principles of virtue and delicacy, yet the major part of the English were much shocked at the nudity of the exotic fair one. The youths and maidens blushed as they passed her in the public walks; the sober citizens and their wives held up their heads and eyes; the *canaille* laughed, and made use of coarse expressions; while her quality supporters walked on each side of the fair Parisian in triumph, habited nearly in the same style with herself, whose *outré* dress, or rather undress, was more wondered at, than her lovely face or perfect form were applauded. She walked, unblushing, amidst her numerous gazers, inwardly ridiculing the awkward imitation of her fashionable copyists, and the gothic appearance of the English *Bourgeoisies*.

She was entirely excluded from the notice of the Duchess of York. That ar-

cellent lady wished to banish, as much as possible, from her circle, all Gallic customs, which were then arrived at an alarming height of depravity. And, when we often speak of the licentious court of England, it is by no means intended to implicate the amiable and august mother of Edward. The courtiers that composed his train were most of them votaries of dissipation; but to the great and valuable parents of Edward, virtue and merit were more endearing passports than nobility, to those courtiers who shone in their circle; and the esteem and favour they received from those worthy personages were the effects of their desert and renown in the service of their country.

The Countess of Devonshire continued to feast and cherish the lovely stranger, who laughed inwardly at her profuseness: public breakfasts, masques, tournaments;

were all performed to do her honour. But Madame was weary of her sojournment amongst such barbarians, as she was pleased to denominate the English, and in haste to return to the festive court she had left, especially as she found her mission to this country in no way of succeeding.

The artful Louis, knowing the amorous complexion of Edward, had sent this lovely woman, to endeavour, by all the persuasions of superior beauty, joined to the most captivating conversation, to draw him in to sign a negotiation, by no means advantageous for England, but highly so for the French monarch.

But Edward, in regard to the charms of women, had become marble. Solely attached to the powerful attractions of Lady Elizabeth Grey, if the love of a new object shot across his thoughts, it was the

Princess of Savoy, adorned with all that youth, innocence, blooming health, and innate modesty could combine to make her lovely and alluring among women. In the contemplation of her charms, even Lady Elizabeth was remembered no more.

And now a scene of charity was opened that reflected the highest honour on THE WOMEN OF ENGLAND, every one of which became emulous in providing for the widows and orphans of those brave men who had fallen in the late war with France, and large subscriptions were levied throughout the whole kingdom.

The treachery of France was at work. Great preparations, on their part, were making for war; while the English, they imagined, fancied themselves securely at peace. But many loyal Yorkists having gone to France, on parties of pleasure, merely to see the country, informed their

king, on their return, with the hostile preparations of Louis. Edward wished to form those alliances which might strengthen his kingdom, and enable him to meet his artful foe with equal force.

Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, made a treaty with England to unite in this war. The motives of the Duke in this were, however, purely selfish; for little was to be depended upon either with him or the French monarch, both bad and despicable princes.

Margaret again became troublesome to Edward. The throne began to totter; for England had made a peace, which had disgusted even the lower classes, who generally cry out for peace, at all events. But the short duration of this, and the determined war that followed, only promised fresh expences and hazard,

Lord Scales, who was then at the head

of administration, was a wise and virtuous man, but of too pacific a nature, and ill formed for the troublous times of Edward's reign. There wanted a person of talents uncommonly superior, at the commencement of a war that threatened to be most arduous and momentous.

The great COBHAM again undertook the guidance of the helm of state; and returned to the ministry, from his retirement, with the power of a "giant refreshed." He opposed his deep penetration against the secret machinations of France, and war was again declared against that nation.

A ludicrous war also took place between Edward and the Countess of Westmoreland, which became the reigning conversation of the day for some time. Hastings had told Jane Shore the expression the Countess had made use of at the

court of Louis; and Jane told it, in confidence, to Lady Elizabeth Grey, who reported it to the prince. At a masque given to the princes of the blood, and the nobility, by Lady Stanley, Edward, in great indignation, told the Countess of Westmoreland of her imprudence, and evinced a serious displeasure at her disloyal expressions. She firmly denied the charge, and insisted on his giving up the author; literally declaring, if she did find him out, she would give him "*a box on the ear!*" In those days, we must not look for the refinement of expression that we at present enjoy. Edward had too much honour to give up his author, but assured her ladyship, he could depend on the veracity of his informer. The Countess was in a rage, and telling the Prince, it was only an invention of his own, to calumniate her, they became irreconcilable.

A short Peace with a treacherous Enemy.

able, to the no small mortification of the Countess, who had often quaffed a bowl of wine with Edward, and whom she really esteemed, whatever might be her good wishes to Louis and the Lancastrian party.

A Cessation to the Earthly Sorrow of an Unfortunate.

CHAP. XIII.

*A CESSATION TO THE EARTHLY SORROW
OF AN UNFORTUNATE.*

On some fond breast the parting soul relies ;
Some pious drops the changing state requires ;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries ;
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

GRAY'S ELEGY.

NEARLY about this period, the lovely Maria de Rosenvault, in the prime of life, and yet possessed of the same angelic countenance as ever, though deprived of the use of her sylph-like limbs, paid the last awful debt of nature. Before we take a final leave of this victim of man's in-

constancy and caprice, we must be permitted to remark the close of that life, over whose brightest moments of sunshine hung the scarce-ever-wavering, but continually lowering, clouds of severe misfortune.

The officer, who appeared brave and generous, and of the most cultivated understanding, under whose protection the sentiments of friendship, combining with that interest she felt for her daughter, had induced her to place herself, proved to her an afflicting scourge for all her former errors. To exculpate him from the calumny which had assailed him, of his having joined the Lancastrian party, and also to retrieve him from pecuniary embarrassments, brought on himself by his extravagance, Maria would, with indefatigable kindness, rise from her bed in the dead of night, traverse the country in a

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litter, or on horseback,—for convenient carriages for speed were then unknown,—and often prove to his accusers and slanderers, by her refined sense of reasoning and convincing proofs; how basely he was calumniated; while, from her scanty purse, she would satisfy, as far as she was able, his clamorous creditors, or, by her sweet persuasions, render them patient and merciful towards him.

In the height of an ardent fever did she once set out on one of those perilous expeditions; and, falling asleep in an open litter, she manifestly endangered her life. A severe rheumatism was the result, which deprived her for ever of the use of her limbs.

Oh Thou! who wearest a God-like form, to whom woman is to look up, for not only superior endowments, but also superior virtue, say, amidst all thy deep

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researches, if thou could'st yet find what was most wanting in the donation of virtues that thy ALMIGHTY FORMER implanted within thy breast?—No! not one was wanting. HE, when he called thee into being, gave thee every virtue; but passion, sensuality, and an incontrollable power, given thee by the blind policy of nations, has rooted the sweetest, the most angelic, from thy mind, as far as relates to weak and credulous woman! Ask thy own corrupt heart, when the slave of fashion and vice, and conscience will loudly echo to it, that it is GRATITUDE!

The daughter of Maria, it has been remarked before, was in that interesting state of life when adolescence, aided by every feminine attraction, possesses its sweetest charms—unconscious worth, and native innocence. With the most infantine and graceful complacence did she

endeavour, by every amiable attention, to please the protector of her unhappy mother; and, with fascinating *naïveté*, would she anticipate each domestic wish, to render his home as dear to him as possible. Her mother's ill health, her mournful reflections on the various vicissitudes of her life, depressed her natural gaiety, and gave a plaintive and melancholy turn to her conversation, ill suited to the frivolity of the age she lived in. And now, with deep-felt horror, her penetrating eye saw an illicit love kindling in the breast of him, she fancied most her friend, for her beloved daughter. This, it is generally thought, hastened her dissolution; but, while ability remained, she sketched the eventful history of her sufferings, as a valuable and warning legacy for a daughter, exemplarily virtuous; and who spurned, with spirit, the degrading offers, from the

ignoble betrayer of female honour ; indebted to her mother for credit, fame, and reputation.

The sweet hope, now, of a provision for her daughter vanished. For this cherished idol of her affections she had sacrificed herself and her principles ; but indigence seemed to be the only inheritance she should be able to bequeath her.

In the midst of her fallen reputation, and when her mind was a prey to the bitterest anguish, De Rosenvault could not but see and adore the virtue he had once despised, and the native purity of that wife, to whom he had been cruelly and repeatedly faithless, during the short time they lived together. He wished, at the time even when she was assailed by these last complications of misfortune, to be again united to her ; but such was her

high sense of conjugal honour that, not his infidelity or neglect, but her own errors, prevented her from accepting the offered reconciliation. She determined never to bring back to his bosom a wife, who had departed from the paths of virtue; and, having once deviated from the line of rectitude, though to a faithless and despicable husband, she resolved never to see him more.

With difficulty a noble friend obtained from her first and royal lover a small annuity, to be insured to her daughter. This sweetened her latter moments, which were rapidly approaching.

She entreated her body might be buried in a cemetery belonging to one of the royal palaces; that the gay, the thoughtless, Edward might, as he contemplated the narrow and mournful habitation of

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her he had once loved so well, cast a thought from the scenes of luxury and pleasure towards the chambers of death; where the beauty, whose smile had once diffused happiness through his soul, and transported it with rapture and delight, lay neglected by him in her last moments, and was there confounded with the dust of deformity.

We know not the agitated thoughts of the soul that, with one foot on the threshold of eternity, casts back a longing look to all it leaves dear on earth. It is natural to suppose, that Maria, when she gave her last solemn injunction to be buried in that spot, imagined she saw Edward, with whom, in the infancy of their love, she had often taken the rural walk, now wandering near her hamble tomb, with his intended bride, rich in all

the pride of youthful charms, a royal and a happy rival. She might fancy the conscience of Edward whispering in his breast many a reflective tribute to the worth of her he had for ever lost, and giving a sigh to her unhappy fate. And that, as he cast his eyes with delight on a face which, though lovely, could not equal Maria's; while the unavoidable comparison might reproach him for his cruel negligence in deserting her, might, she prayed, bring to his bosom that sincere penitence, which should determine him to cherish the blooming treasure he was yet in possession of. Perhaps her fond imagination figured to itself her royal lover dropping a tear over her ashes. From him she incessantly loved, the bare idea of such a testimony of tenderness, would afford her comfort even in death.

She spoke but little on the day of her decease, and seemed absorbed in deep meditation. The last words she uttered, about two hours before her dissolution, were comprised in a blessing, the most fervent, on her darling daughter.

So died Maria de Rosenvault; formed for virtue, but an unwilling victim to the vices of others. With a heart open to every generous and sympathetic feeling, her hand would bestow the last shilling in her possession, knowing that the morrow brought her no certainty of another. With the keenest anxiety for a daughter's purity, she was obliged to support her by living in an unlawful commerce with those, whose conduct made her despise their persons, while necessity obliged her to submit to their will; and oftentimes undergo a penance, the most severe to a

delicate and feeling mind, that of complacently receiving, at her *conversazioni*, the titled libertine, whose principles were atheism and immorality; and the haughty beauty, high in splendid life, who set virtue at defiance, laughed at female modesty, and banished it from her discourse. There Vice failed in her contagious efforts; and the youthful mind, while it is too easily warmed by the smooth-tongued sophistry of the elegant and sensible man of fashion, and the refined polish of the seemingly delicate and insinuating female seducer, flies affrighted and disgusted from open and daring licentiousness, which, unmasked, speedily defeats its own unhallowed purpose. So the daughter of the unfortunate Maria turned abhorrent from the path of vice, which, to her reflecting mind, appeared divested of

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all its flowery enamel, and shewed to her, by the afflictions of her mother, that its walks were choaked up with the thorns of sorrow and remorse.

CHAP. XIV.

A TRIUMPH.

Then will I raise aloft the *milk white rose**,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfum'd.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE House of York, at this time, seemed wanting in no support; but, fixed on an apparently firm foundation at home, thought only of ensuring her conquests abroad, and humbling the pride of France and her allies.

But the demon of discord again seemed to unite his force against the happiness of the Yorkists; and the best blood in the

* Device of the House of York.

kingdom was to be shed as a sacrifice for Edward's crimes and follies. From private enemies of the virtuous Princess of Savoy, or from what cause was unknown, he took, or appeared to take, a rooted aversion to her, and refused to ratify the treaties of his marriage, declaring he never would unite his fate to her's.

The hopes of Lady Elizabeth again strengthened; and it is universally believed, that she and her confessor were the chief agents in a plot to calumniate this unfortunate and worthy princess. It is very certain she shewed, no longer, a repugnance at receiving the visits of the prince; and the tie of his affection for her seemed now more indissoluble than ever.

Warwick, enraged at his duplicity, no longer able to endure the conduct of the man who had thus called his integrity in

question at the court of Savoy, and from whom he had also received the most virulent abuse for his virtuous expostulations, quitted his party for ever, and united himself to the house of Lancaster.

The name of Warwick, skilled in arms, brave as a lion, diffused terror against whoever he marched. A large body, composed of the chief nobility and bravest soldiers in the kingdom, revolted from Edward, to join their beloved Warwick. Even Lord Hastings, whose love and loyalty to his master were proverbial, felt himself wavering, and half inclined to follow the earl; but he reflected on the confidence which Edward placed in him, and in which he was determined to fall, sooner than abuse.

Lady Elizabeth trembled at the disaffection of the peers, and was fearful all her hopes of being Queen of England

would, by this untimely revolt, be for ever blighted, by the means of her intrigues to strengthen her power. With tears she besought Lord Hastings, who, she knew, had great influence over the minds of the people, not to desert his prince in this perilous moment. His own noble principles of loyalty, and not the artifice of Lady Elizabeth, were the springs that actuated his conduct. He had long perceived the deep-veiled ambition of this lady; and was particularly ardent in his wishes to see the Princess of Savoy in possession of her just rights. He was now commanded by Edward to be for ever silent on that subject; and, though the despotic feature of the times obliged him to obey the royal mandate, he was strenuously determined not to pay his court to Lady Elizabeth, farther than the cold and distant rules of politeness

due to her sex and rank in life required. The ideas he entertained of her exactly corresponded with those of an unfortunate Lollard, who expired in prison for uttering the following expression:—" If she is really a princess, I owe her homage as the spouse of Edward ; but, if only Elizabeth Grey, I think her no more virtuous, nor more to be respected, than the mistress of another man."

Though Hastings, and several other noble lords, still kept firmly attached to Edward, and rallied all the force they were able, to oppose the rebels ; yet this unfortunate alienation of the Earl of Warwick, from the cause that he had so long and faithfully served, greatly weakened the house of York : and the heir of Lancaster was hastening on with a powerful army, to take fixed possession of the throne. How often thus do we see pri-

vate iniquities, and the profanation of sacred vows, bring on an increase of national calamities!

All who possessed the mild and tender virtues of humanity foresaw, with pain, the terrific prospect of a reign like that of Margaret of Anjou; for it was she who governed, and not the meek and pious Henry VI. Long had that prince, more fitted for the cloister than the throne, resigned his sceptre into the hands of a woman possessed of masculine powers, with courage to defend, and spirit to maintain, her regal dignity; but who was so devoid of all the softer feelings of her sex, that she united to that manly bravery a savage and revengeful cruelty.

Possessed of such a general as Warwick, she now carried ruin and devastation amidst all the party of the house of York.

Lady Elizabeth Grey saw, with anguish and disappointment, the threatened downfall of her ambition. Edward, in his serious moments of reflection, still did homage in his heart to the superior virtue and charms of the Princess of Savoy. But as Warwick had ever shewn himself the strenuous supporter of her rights, and, with open admiration, descanted on the attractions of her person, it afforded her enemies the means of laying a black and atrocious plot against her; and, while the heart of Edward, often prone to excellent impressions, seemed pleading in her favour, a new scene of unheard of calumny took rise, and slander, with envenomed tongue, declared Warwick to be her accepted and highly favoured adorer; who was, in effect, fighting to establish himself on the English throne, instead of

Henry VI. when he would declare the princess queen.

Edward, at the feet of Lady Elizabeth, again renewed his solemn oath, of never uniting with the Princess Bona; and bound himself by another, equally solemn, of a public marriage with Lady Elizabeth, and triumphant coronation, if ever he should recover a throne seemingly now for ever lost to him.

The army, commanded by Warwick, still continued victorious; and every day performed new feats of valour, with increased success. Flushed with conquest, Margaret of Anjou committed some unheard of and taunting cruelties on the York party; which greatly alienated those of her followers, who were but new in her service, and whom the name of the beloved Warwick, alone, had brought over to enlist under her standard.

A part of her army, disgusted with her sanguinary proceedings, began already to desert over to Edward; who, throwing off the restraint his brother had laid him under, was collecting a chosen band of brave and hardy warriors, and, by one desperate effort, he resolved to regain his crown, or lose his life. He met the queen's party, headed by the noble and ill-fated Warwick, in the memorable plain of Tewkesbury; in which battle that unfortunate general was slain.

Margaret now saw her late sanguine and brilliant hopes for ever departed. Her prime bulwark was gone. Her army, seeing their leader slain, deserted by multitudes, and rallied themselves under the banners of the house of York. The woman prevailed over the Amazon, and she fled from the scene of combat,

bathed in tears ; the first she had shed in all her adverse campaigns ; for, with Warwick, she knew every gleam of hope was fled. Those who followed him into the field, wherever he went, from affection to his person, were no longer attached to her interests.

When woman forgets all the softer virtues of her sex, for which alone she was designed ; when the camp becomes her delight, and scenes of rapine and carnage render callous the heart, which, enshrined in a frame of delicacy, evinces that it ought to be the seat of tenderness ; she gains few proselytes, and scarce one sincere friend.

The impetuosity of blind revenge, and deeply injured honour, had stimulated Warwick, in the anguish of conflicting passions, to follow the fortune, and attach

himself to the claims, of the wretched Margaret. Their beloved leader slain, his followers thought of her no more; they recollected their beloved prince, who, in the midst of all his indiscretions and faults, was generous, brave, and kind; to the meanest of his soldiery.

When his fine form appeared in the plains of Tewkesbury, he seemed like a bright star dropped from the firmament, to guide them to a safe and tranquil port. "Long live," said they, "the noble Edward! and firm for ever stand the illustrious pillars of the house of York!" The cry soon became universal; Queen Margaret's followers quitted the field in dismay; and Edward was crowned, with the unanimous consent of the people.

Henry VI. was now safely lodged in those apartments of the Tower, which

were destined to prisoners of state; a captive in his own kingdom, near the palace of his successful opponent.

Margaret, who detested his pusillanimity, was by no means the kind and gentle soother of his sorrows. But, much as we may dislike this woman's want of feminine amiability, yet sour misfortune, whenever she triumphs, pains the feeling heart; and whosoever feels the arrow from her sure-strung bow, deserves commiseration. So the sad fall of Margaret cannot fail of exciting pity, even in those who condemn her masculine conduct.

Harassed, as she was, by her late desperate defeat, she still hoped to procure some force from France to enable her again to enter the field against Edward; and at last she effected her escape, in the disguise of a country gentleman, attended by the Duke of Somerset, who had fol-

lowed her faithfully in all her misfortunes, and who habited himself now in the disguise of a menial servant.

Their plans appeared to promise success; and the noble fugitives began their intended enterprize.

CHAP. XV.

THE SAD CHANCE OF WAR.

I've touch'd the highest point,
And from that full meridian of my glory
I shall fall - - - - -

Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man see me more!

SHAKESPEARE.

LEAVING Margaret, and her faithful companion in misfortune, to pursue their hazardous journey, the memorable day of Tewkesbury must be again reverted to; where, though a complete victory was gained by the Yorkists, they lost the pride of all their heroes, the matchless Lord Fauconberg, whose unexampled deeds of valour have been before

spoken of. He was son to that Lord Fauconberg who was killed at the battle of Ravenspur.

Our navy, then, did not approach, in any degree, to that zenith of glory it at present boasts; for though Lord Fauconberg frequently protected the sea, against the intrusions of our gallic neighbours, he was also often called into the field, during the combats of civil war.

This undaunted and successful hero, whom no danger could intimidate, or numbers overawe, seemed, on the morning of this decisive battle, to have a presentiment of his approaching fate. He penned his last testament, and bequeathed to a female friend he highly valued, and whom, after his wife, he made mention of with the tenderest regard, a castle he possessed in one of the pleasantest counties in England, with a part of his

fortune; and recommended her to the kind protection of the government, when he should be no more. He knew the love that the king and people bore to him; and that they would faithfully attend to his dying request, and hold it sacred. In his pocket book was found a hasty prayer, addressed in fervency to the SUPREME BEING, imploring success to that cause in which he was engaged, and recommending his own spirit to HIM who gave it.

By a skilful manœuvre of his troops, he might be said to mow down whole ranks of the enemy; and he fell, just as the shout of Victory announced the conclusion of this memorable battle; as if, having atchieved all that was great and wonderful for his country, Heaven had reserved this glorious moment for his death; and destined that the stain of his

blood on the laurels that encircled his brow, should preserve them in immortal and unfading verdure, through recording ages.

Warlike and magnanimous spirit of Pembroke, forgive an appearance of partial praise, unfelt by the author of this humble essay! Truly sensible of thy exalted worth, it was declared, in the commencement of this history, that the fondest partiality knew not to which the preference of valour and virtue could be accorded. But at the time marked by these records, the gallant Pembroke lived; idolized by the people, adored by his monarch, and loved and valued by his private friends; the charm of society, the ornament of a court, the scourge of France, and of every hostile enemy to that state which Pembroke defended with the brightest deeds of valour, accompa-

nied with the most ardent zeal and unshaken fidelity.

Tears streamed down the cheeks of Edward, at beholding the fall of this firm and loyal supporter of his house, the valiant Fauconberg. Every healing art was essayed, but life was fled for ever. By an order from the court, the hero's remains were fixed on a bed of state; and masses for the repose of his soul were performed in every church and monastery in the kingdom.

A funeral, of the utmost magnificence, was the last testimony of affection and gratitude that England could give her lamented hero. The solemn train moved in awful procession through the city of London, whose streets were overlaid with the finest gravel. The mournful silence that was preserved, rendered the sad

scene most beautifully impressive. Not a breath, not a murmur was heard, but every eye seemed crystallized with a tear. The voices of the priests faltered, as they chanted the requiem before the body of the hero which was borne on a triumphal car. Edward followed, and was a mourner indeed! After him the other princes of the blood, with the nobles, cardinals, bishops, and inferior clergy.

The body was carried in this magnificent manner to the church, which was formerly situated where now stands the cathedral church of St. Paul, where the Cardinal of York pronounced a funeral oration; and, while the chorus of priests sang the *de profundis*, the grief of the audience could no longer be restrained; an universal sigh burst from the overcharged bosoms of the mourners, and not

an eye but paid its flowing tribute to the valiant and lamented Fauconberg.

While England thus mourned for her departed hero, the keenest anxiety was felt by her true and loyal friends, for the conservation of him, who presided at the helm of affairs, the illustrious Cobham; whose ill health, from his great mental exertions, for the welfare of his country, filled every patriotic bosom with alarm, and their most ardent prayers were offered up, for his recovery, so necessary to the preservation of the state.

The intriguing Louis, although deeply chagrined by the triumph of the house of York, laid his plans to bring over the Duke of Burgundy to form an alliance with him; though the treacherous Duke pretended to be the friend of Edward.

Perhaps the epithet of treachery may be too forcible, as the possessions of the Duke of Burgundy lying so exposed to those of the French King, his motives might be dictated by the fear of losing those possessions, when he knew the intriguing spirit of Louis, aided by so powerful a minister or adviser as De Commines.

Louis, ever disposed to attack the weakest, now was bitter in his invective against the Duchess of Burgundy. It was she, as he declared, who fomented her husband's hatred to him; who, from her relationship to Edward, promoted every plan of alliance with this country: when too late, she would see her error, and "her fair eyes be drowned in tears;" and wretched should he be to see such beauty in distress. More beautiful than wise,

this weak princess listened to the flattering encomiums which he uttered by his ambassador ; and wrought, with her fair hands, a scarf for him, who was sent by the artful Louis, to undermine the ducal dominion of her imbecile and worthless husband.

On the other hand, the mother of Edward, who, no doubt, regarded her as her daughter, urged her on to strengthen the bonds of alliance that had been formed by her marriage with the duke, and also with the treaty lately signed between him and the prince her son. She undertook then to demonstrate to Charles, who did not well deserve the name of *Bold*, what was the general opinion concerning him. The duchess told her husband he was not thought brave ; that it was fancied that he was afraid of putting himself at the head

of his army. Thus, like a vane, blown by all winds, the beauteous, but trifling, sister of Edward was made a tool in the hands of either party. Always to be found at the head-quarters of her husband, the French monarch wished her to be informed, that circumstances, threatening the dukedom of Charles, were serious, and she had better retire; while she, wishing to promote the interest of Edward, wished not to remove till the duke should order her away.

A treacherous letter was written by Louis XI. wherein he declared how sorry he was to have been induced ever to have signed any thing that could militate against the Duke of Burgundy; that for several years he had been his firm friend; and assured him that he now sincerely pitied him for his alliance with England: he

pitied him, because he was sure to be conquered. At the same time, he artfully told him, he might prevent all those ravages of war; which was, to withdraw his alliance from England, and enter into league and amity with him. He then scoffingly told him to command his duchess to return to her spindle, and the management of her domestic concerns; and, in her leisure moments, contemplate her beauties in a mirror, and adorn her flowing hair with gems and flowers.

The unfeeling Louis, when he heard of the death of the gallant Fauconberg, publicly rejoiced. He had given him the appellation of "Butcher Fauconberg," which proves how little he knew the private worth of him, who was "bold as a lion, and gentle as a lamb." Edward, in the midst of an elegant and splendid enter-

tainment, given on the feast of the Epiphany, was melancholy and depressed; and could scarce repress the starting tear, when he reflected, that, on the past anniversary of that day, he had enjoyed the charming and exhilarating society of his lost and lamented supporter, the valiant Fauconberg.

CHAP. XVI.

BRITISH LADIES OF FORMER DAYS.

————— These are stars indeed;
And sometimes *falling* ones.

SHAKESPEARE.

EDWARD still continued to treat the Princess of Savoy with the most contemptuous neglect and marked indifference; and his name became a jest at that court, which, though gratified that England should seek its alliance, was conscious that it strengthened the throne of Britain, by uniting its force to that kingdom. Vandevilles were sung in ridicule of Edward and his bigoted favourite; for

France had thrown off the supremacy of the pope ; and, to ridicule some gross absurdities in the church of Rome, had become fashionable.

Those who had formerly admired Edward for the graces of his youth, and his many accomplishments, to which, they flattered themselves, was subjoined an excellent heart, were grieved at their disappointed hopes ; and, though they tolerated the ludicrous songs in ridicule of him, which were often sung in their presence, the relatives of the princess exclaimed, with serious concern, “ *Ah! qu’il soit guéri, ce cœur gâté!*” *Ah! may this corrupted heart be made whole!*

Since the last short peace with France, English women had adopted a change of manners and appearance, which astonished their countrymen, who still possessed that saturnine distance and gravity so pe-

culiar to their character ; a distance that appears to dread an incroachment on the plenitude of their purse, and a gravity proceeding too often from the low pride of knowing it to be well filled.

The dress of the ladies became more simple, but infinitely more tasteful : it bore a resemblance to the *costume* of the Roman and Grecian ladies. But Roman virtue and Grecian industry seemed to be little understood by the British dames ; who, while they displayed every feminine attraction to the most alluring advantage, coarse and masculine manners, with an impudent *nonchalance*, that set modesty at defiance, were practised by the greatest part of those who claimed pretensions to rank in the higher circles of fashion. They quaffed the rosy bowl of wine with convivial freedom, and ate like farmers. Indefatigable in the ardour of the chase,

they followed the sports of the field with avidity and delight.

The Duchess of Suffolk mounted a spirited charger, and ran him against that of Lord Stanley, for twelve flaggons of the choicest wine. She had prepared herself also for a tilting match, at a tournament, with a knight of high renown in arms. The gilded armour was purchased, the golden high-plumed helmet, and a shield with the device of "The gifts of Bacchus for the conqueror!" But the husband of this fair heroine laid his positive commands on her, to forbid and prevent the exposure of a person peculiar for feminine grace and delicacy, though the outward covering of such a daring and masculine mind.

The Duchess of Suffolk's horse-racing and intended tilting match, on which considerable bets were laid, that she would

undertake it, in spite of the duke's restrictions, furnished sufficient matter for conversation amongst the higher circles, for some time ; till the following circumstances excited the attention of all ranks of people.

A young lady, of interesting appearance, possessed of an ample fortune, the natural daughter of a nobleman of high rank, for some domestic disagreement, lived separated from her husband, to whom she had been united very early in life.

Though the age was in a great degree enlightened, yet a firm belief in witchcraft continued to prevail ; and, not very long before this lady's marriage, in the early part of the reign of Henry VI. Bolingbroke and his associates were burnt for the crime of witchcraft ; being accused of having made a figure of wax, which, con-

tinually melting before a slow fire, so gradually caused the strength of Henry to decline. The high rank of Bolingbroke, or that of his wife, could not shield them from the malice of their accusers, nor the combination of superstition and cruelty. Elinor of Bolingbroke confessed that she had been anxious to obtain charms, and had made use of several spells to ensure the affections of her husband; though she solemnly averred her innocence of combining in any plots against the king: but, having ingenuously confessed this weakness, the rest of the accusations against her were easily believed; and, after a penance the most severe, she was banished to the Isle of Man, where she suffered death: though some historians alledge that she suffered the punishment of her pretended crime in London.

When this lady, so much superior in

years and understanding, had so firm a belief in the miracles produced by magic, it need not be wondered at, that a young and inexperienced female should be infected with the prevailing error of the age she lived in.

It was remarked above, that she lived in a state of separation from her husband. She therefore resolved to ensure the safety of her virtue, amidst a great variety of company with which she associated, by means of a talisman she wore at all times tied round her neck, and suspended to a chain of polished steel. The person who composed for her this charm, assured the credulous fair one, that it would assuredly preserve her chastity, although assailed by the severest temptations.

A young priest, however, had made a tender impression on her heart; which had appeared hitherto more to be the

seat of coquetish apathy, than possessed of any sensibility to the passion of love. The brother of this *fleurette* dispensing ecclesiastic, at the same time, felt a strong predilection for this widowed wife ; and, though they were well convinced, that the one, by her being already bound by the laws of wedlock, and the other by his vows, were rendered incapable of forming a matrimonial alliance with her, confided the secret of their attachment to each other, and continued to visit the lady, and thus increased their regard by the frequent enjoyment of the charms of her conversation.

Though it was never exactly known, it is generally believed that these culpable brothers agreed on adjudging the fair to him, for whom she discovered a decided partiality ; and, at length, they formed

the iniquitous plan of carrying her off by violence.

The lady, who had a firm belief in dreams, is said to have had an extraordinary vision the night before this assault took place; and, fully convinced in her own mind, that the predicted event must come to pass, she engaged the above mentioned gentlemen to dine with her the next day, with a prohibition to her servant to admit no other company.

After dinner, she was threatened with the prospect of her *enlèvement* by the priest; and both gentlemen took their leave. She called in a confidential maid servant, and, in an almost fainting state, and seemingly in great agitation of mind, she told her of the plan that was about to be put in practice against her. But she sat leaning her head on her hand, without making the smallest effort to es-

cape from so dangerous a situation, though she might have effected it, there is hardly a doubt, with safety and but little difficulty.

In about an hour the brothers returned with a swift travelling vehicle; into which, with but little resistance on her part, they forced the lady; who, after being absent with the most favoured gentleman for a short time, returned to her home; and the brothers were ordered to stand a trial.

Various were the conjectures caused by this strange elopement. Parties ran high, and opinions for and against the lady caused several dissensions in the polite circles.

An enthusiastic young man, in the true spirit of chivalry, wrote to the deeply injured fair one, as he deemed her, and offered to espouse her quarrel; de-

claring, like a true knight errant, his adoration of her person and virtues, though he had never seen her !

At length this important trial, expected with so much anxiety, came on. The court of justice was held at Oxford, and crowded to a degree never known before. Pale, and almost breathless with agitation, the fair prosecutrix made her appearance. Every eye beheld her with pity; and every voice thundered vengeance on the violated rites of hospitality. The priest, they murmured, among themselves, must for ever lose his sacerdotal dignity; as he, on every account, must be pronounced the most guilty. The estates of his culpable brother, would, no doubt, be forfeited to the crown. And thus, indeed, would their suppositions have been verified, had it not been proved on the trial, by concurring circumstances and credible

witnesses, that the lady had been consenting to that excursion with the gentlemen, which bore so much the appearance of assault and violence, and that, when seated in the travelling vehicle, she tore from her neck the hitherto cherished *talisman*, and, throwing it from her, exclaimed, "Oh! welcome *pleasure*, in thy flowery mantle, and all thy soft attire, and hence for ever *steel* clad and *cold* preserver of female honour!"

The mind of the public seemed no longer biassed in her favour. What were the motives for this assault must still remain a paradox. The priest must have been conscious that his vows already made prevented him from marrying; therefore no action brought against the lady, for the breach of her matrimonial engagements, in procuring her a divorce, could ensure to him the acquirement of that wealth she possessed.

Had she been prompted alone by an illicit inclination, she might have indulged it, unknown to the world. We are rather inclined to look on those who urged her on to this rash step, and thus made her the public talk, as unprincipled libertines, whose chief aim was notoriety; while she appears to have been the victim of enthusiastic superstition, and labouring under a kind of partial insanity.

Disappointed Ambition.

CHAP. XVII.

DISAPPOINTED AMBITION.

What will become of me now, wretched lady !
Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
No friends, no hope ; no kindred weep for me :
Almost no grave allow'd me. Like the lilly,
That once was mistress of the field, I'll hang
The head, and perish !

SHAKESPEARE.

MARGARET, the better to disguise her plans, affected indisposition, and affirmed, that the change of climate was absolutely requisite to her recovery. She therefore had the good fortune, as she fondly imagined it, of obtaining a passport for France.

She has been accused, but we believe unjustly, of experiencing for Somerset that tender regard she had formerly lavished on the Duke of Suffolk. To neither of these noblemen did the unfortunate queen, whose heart seemed a stranger to all the softer passions, evince any other partiality, than what she thought due to their political abilities, and undaunted valour in her cause. Somerset has also been accused of aiming at the throne of his master, and at the instigations of the queen; but Somerset fought for him he thought his only lawful master, and from his steady adherence to the house of Lancaster. Brave and blindly courageous, to an excess of rashness, Margaret, who was an Amazon, and detested the want of spirit both in male and female, certainly found Suffolk and Somerset more after

her own heart, than the mild and pious Henry; whose every leisure hour was passed on his knees before a crucifix, or in supplications to the saints to give success to his arms. Without self-exertion, on all occasions, the saints are generally deaf; and HE, to whom prayers should alone be addressed, commands us to make use of our own abilities, and improve the talent he has lent us, ere we can expect to prosper. Activity, on our part with implicit confidence in that favour, which is "alike good in all it grants, or all that it denies," will gain us more assistance from heaven, than all the monkish indolence of continued and outward acts of devotion.

Margaret, seemingly successful in her disguise, was passing rapidly towards the coast, when, as she travelled in an open

litter, her carriage past close to one in which rode the Duchess of York, who immediately recognised her. "I am lost!" said the wretched Queen, to her fellow traveller. "The duchess has fixed her eyes on me; and I am convinced she knows us both. O Somerset! surely my sex will gain some sympathy from the duchess; especially when she recollects how often she has been thrown herself from the summit of that power she now possesses; but oh! it is for you I fear, the long inveterate, the sworn and determined foe of the house of York!" "Fear not for me, my queen," said Somerset, "I will cast myself on the mercy of the duchess." So saying, the brave man leaped from the litter, and presented himself before her highness, while Margaret leaned over the side of her

travelling vehicle, holding her hat before her face.

To the name of the Duchess of York the idea of philanthropy ever associated itself; and she now gave a magnanimous proof of it, in her conduct towards the unfortunate Queen Margaret. Affecting not to know the travellers, she said to Somerset, "Friend, your master looks very pale; I believe he is not well; why did you stop your carriage? I would willingly have spared you this unnecessary homage; proceed on your journey."

This welcome injunction did not require repeating a second time; but, unfortunately for Margaret, the duchess mentioned the incident, in confidence, to the Duchess of Clarence, whose country seat lay contiguous to that spot where this circumstance took place.

The Duke of Clarence had sometimes, whether in jest or earnest is unknown, been heard to say, that he was sure he should one day be in possession of the throne of England; and, when the bowl was briskly circulated at the festive banquet, has declared his right to it to be equal with that of his brother Edward. This was rather a favourite theme in his conversation. His brother of Gloucester had no children; Edward's health was sometimes shaken by his intemperance; while Clarence enjoyed that full possession of the first of earthly blessings, which appeared to bid defiance to all the attacks of midnight revelry or excess.

His duchess fanned the flame of that ambition, which should raise her to the regal dignity; but which, while the indefatigable Margaret lived, she knew, should

it devolve to them, could never be possessed with any degree of certainty. After the visit of her mother-in-law, she put her schemes in execution, to prevent the success of her royal opponent.

She affected indisposition, during her stay, which caused the Duchess of York to shorten her visit; and the young duchess, then disguising herself in the dress of a maid servant, entered a swift travelling litter, with only two attendants, and instantly took a different route to that of the fugitives, but arrived at that inn, nearly as soon as those she was in pursuit of, at which they would necessarily be obliged to put up, before they could embark on board any vessel that was destined for France.

In the above mentioned disguise, the blooming duchess, for the value of a few

marks, had the privilege of waiting on these illustrious and unsuspecting guests, who discoursed together in French, on the magnanimity of the Duchess of York. They then spoke of Edward; he was not spared; his vices, his every foible was exaggerated by these partial artists. The Duke of Clarence was not painted by them in very alluring colours. His scenes of midnight riot, his low amours, were all depicted; and his duchess, who, though in the flower of youth, was far from handsome, was spoken of with many an invidious sneer, and then thrown into the back ground, as too insignificant and disregarded a being, to occupy much place in the picture.

The pique of female vanity finished what ambition had begun; and the duchess quitted the room, and barricaded

the door upon them. Then, throwing off her disguise, she sent for a party of officers, to seize her prisoners, as rebels to the state.

Margaret, though severely disappointed, was not depressed; but, turning to the duchess, she said to her, "How true do you verify that maxim, that those who make it their business to listen to others, *never hear their own praises*. Margaret may yet triumph; and the day may come, haughty bride of Clarence, when reduced to the situation you this day so voluntarily and so awkwardly filled, that you may have to thank a queen, for having taught you how to arrange a desert in a proper manner."

Little did the wretched duchess, who now triumphed over her unhappy enemy, know the deep anguish that was prepar-

Disappointed Ambition.

ing for herself, on her return to the capital.

Her lord, to whom she had been but a very short time wedded, was convicted, through treachery and accusations, most of them false, of treason; her own fortunes confiscated, and herself left in indigence. So true are the words of the poet,

“ Misfortune stands with her bow ever bent
 “ Over the world; and he, who harms another,
 “ Directs the goddess in what part he wounds,
 “ There to strike deep the arrow in himself.”

Edward had now began to feel himself firmly established; and the acquisition of such a prisoner as Margaret was not of that importance, which it might heretofore have been. He therefore coldly complimented the duchess on her vigilance,

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and ordered her a trifling gratuity ; but remained inflexible to her supplications, for the release of her husband. Margaret was closely imprisoned, and Somerset ordered for immediate execution.

CHAP. XVIII.

A CHANGE OF MINISTRY.

I have watched the night,
Ay, night by night in studying good for England.

It grieves many;
The gentleman is learn'd, a most rare speaker;
To nature none more bound.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE intriguing French monarch, now incited the king of Scotland to declare war against England. This weak prince lived on bad terms with his own nobility, and his force was unequal to his intended

enterprise; so that, when he was about to enter England, the English attacked him with superior force, and, the barons conspiring against the Scottish monarch's favourites, the army was disbanded.

The Duke of Albany entered Scotland with a powerful army, took Berwick, and obliged the Scots to resign their fortresses. This success emboldened the English to carry on the war with France with additional vigour.

But death, as if his petrifying dart was levelled at the firmest support of England's throne, now shook it, in triumph, over the sick couch of the unparalleled and illustrious Cobham, as his destined prey. Britannia drooping, hung her head, and mourned at the fated departure of the greatest genius, aided by the most exalted and patriotic virtue, her favoured island

had ever produced. Cobham died, as he had lived, anxious only for that country he had preserved, by the wisdom of his councils, the depth of his reasoning, and that profound knowledge of her internal and political system, which had enabled him so long and so successfully to guide her through the storm of intestine faction, and all the horrors of a foreign war with a treacherous and sanguinary enemy.

Britain, enriched by his superior wisdom, by the calculation of her finances, saved by his prudence, and upheld by his courage, flourished in the midst of an arduous and expensive war, and towered over her enemies in splendour, wealth, and power. Like a skilful "PILOT WEATHERING THE STORM," he brought her in safe from all the rocks and quick-

sands, which had once well nigh precipitated her into the threatening gulph beneath.

Exhausted nature sunk, at length, under those accumulated efforts, which were above mortality to surmount, and she fell under them; while the last breath that quivered on his lips falteringly uttered, "ALAS! MY COUNTRY!"

When this great man's body was opened, his brain and heart were the only inward parts that were found entire. How emblematic of the inheritor of those sublime qualities, which actuated his heart and head! COURAGE and VIRTUE preserved the former in its own native firmness; and WISDOM, which bids defiance to decay, and flourishes through succeeding ages, situated aloft in her "throne, the brain," decreed that Cob-

ham's, her chosen seat, should mark, by its sanctity, the stability of her kingdom.

True is that maxim which says, we know not the value of any good, till it is no longer within our reach. Many, now convinced of the worth of Cobham, and yet who had formerly wished to behold Lovelace at the head of affairs, mourned bitterly for the loss of England's truest and ablest support. They dreaded the threatened success of his opponents, and trembled at the idea of seeing them invested with power.

However, the fears of the people were but too soon verified, and a new parliament was composed, chiefly of those men, who had had the misguidance of Edward's youth; among which Lovelace held a distinguished office. That virtuous parlia-

ment, which had stood for so long a time under Edward's excellent father, were now all out of place; which was filled up by men, who sought not the good of their country, like Cobham, but only how to fill their own coffers, give expensive entertainments, and lay the nation under fresh taxes and contributions to support their own unbounded extravagance.

The parliament are generally willing to promote a French war; but Margaret, being a Frenchwoman, some of the Lancastrian party clamoured for peace. This, by a majority of voices would have been deemed dishonourable at this crisis of affairs, and new taxes were levied for carrying on the war with fresh alacrity.

A * tenth of every one's rent was paid,

* See Hume's reign of Edward IV.

and an inventory of every person's goods produced; which was very distressing and humiliating to the people at large, as by that means every person's wealth was not only much diminished, but exposed, — and many a fair daughter remained a burthen on an industrious parent, who had fondly hoped her merits might obtain her a deserving husband. But, as in the present day, few brides were desirable without money. In all ages we find Cupid requires his arrows to be tipped with gold, before he dare lead his votaries to the altar of Hymen.

The new ministry, however, in spite of all their want of penetration, soon discovered the treachery of the Duke of Burgundy. He had concluded a kind of treaty with England, which he treacher-

ously broke, and shewed himself the subjected vassal of the king of France. Lovelace, in a most eloquent and spirited speech, deprecated his meanness, and stimulated the English to revenge his perfidy. This gained Lovelace many friends from the party of the Yorkists. But his energy appeared to be the mere froth and gasconade of the moment; he still cherished his party principles, and was the fixed friend of the French and the Lancastrians.

The English, convinced that the Duke of Burgundy had shamefully broke through his treaty with them, determined to have no farther alliance with him; since they found he had treacherously corresponded with the French king, and it was discovered that a mutual compact was made between these two artful monarchs, neither

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to make peace with England, without the consent of each other. Weak and wicked as was the Duke of Burgundy, he was a fit tool in the hands of the intriguing ruler of France, to enable him to carry on the war with England; although, in order the better to facilitate his plans against this country, he was endeavouring to negotiate a peace, through the favour of the new ministry.

A burial of the utmost magnificence, wherein was combined every grandeur that funeral pomp could display, was now the last token of deep regret which could be shewn by a mourning nation for that illustrious mortal, whose talents seemed *more* than mortal, and which were never equalled in past or present ages—the wise and virtuous COBHAM, who united to all the depth of learning those shining abili-

ties, which bounteous nature, at his birth, had bestowed upon him. Grace, elocution, and dignity accompanied his language in the senate and in private life. Wedded to his country alone, he was her protector and defender, in dangers the most trying, and most unheard of. When tottering on the verge of ruin, by the threatened downfall of her throne, amidst the dissensions of party, he, by efforts almost supernatural, raised her up, and established the house of his lawful monarch. By his political skill and knowledge, he saw through all the plots of a treacherous foreign enemy, and opposed his wonderful powers against the machinations of all Europe. He raised an everlasting bulwark for England, in the wise disposition of her army and navy; enriched her finances, and increased her commerce, amidst all the ravages of war.

Though Edward owed to HIS exertions all that he possessed, it was remarked by many, with concern, that he did not attend his funeral. The Duke of Gloucester, whose political genius was far superior to the rest of his brothers, and who, though he had once been the companion of Lovelace, had now quitted his society, conscious who were the only real friends to the house of York, was therefore a sorrowing mourner in the solemn procession that composed the funeral of COBHAM.

The Lord-mayor of London, a man of superior abilities, was heard, at these mournful obsequies, to weep audibly; and, as he beheld the last sad reliques deposited in the dreary tomb, he sobbed out, "Oh, England! thy firmest support is gone for ever!"

The Bishop of London was the most enlightened and learned prelate of the age he lived in ; and was an ornament to literature, to the church, and state. In religion he was guided by truth alone, while his moral life was an ornament to his profession : sacredly pure, yet free from all austerity. The firm friend of virtue, he pitied the vicious, and strove to draw them, by the gentlest and most persuasive means, from the path of vice, and gradually lead them on to virtue.

Cobham, from his youth, had been his cherished friend. The love of his country animated the heart of the bishop ; and an ardent desire to see him, who was to be the ruler of that country, all that was great and good. That excellent heart was therefore pained at beholding the influence a bigoted woman held over the

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mind of his prince; while a princess, famed for her virtues and moderation, was set at naught, and the alliance of her country consequently despised. He had for some time absented himself from court, disgusted with the mixture he there found of frivolity and injustice. He had long esteemed Warwick for his many virtues, had mourned over the errors of that nobleman; errors, which were the result of Edward's misconduct. The pangs of the good bishop's bosom, when Warwick was slain, can only be imagined by those who are obliged, through patriotic love, to consider the death of a dearly-valued friend, though a severe loss to an individual, yet a blessing to a nation.

But when COBHAM'S cold ashes were laid in their sepulchral abode, the worthy prelate lost not only a private friend and

companion, but him who was, at that time, England's hope and saviour. Pale with grief, his venerable head sunk drooping on his bosom, as he contemplated his grave; and these, his memorable words, yet remain on record:—"The last sad office is now over! There lie the remains of the greatest man that ever lived!"

CHAP. XIX.

POWER SUPERIOR TO JUSTICE.

Can you think, lords,
That any Englishman dare give counsel
Against his highness's pleasure,
Though he be grown so desperate to be honest?

SHAKESPEARE.

AS the age became more enlightened, reformation appeared to be gaining ground. Many outward absurdities in devotion began to be laid aside; and several ventured openly to profess their dissenting principles from the church of Rome.

Amongst the disciples of Wickliffe,

were a baron and his lady, of the name of De Somerville, descended from an ancient Norman family. Lady De Somerville and Lady Elizabeth Grey had been friends from their earliest youth; but, unlike the faithful Moabiteess, that said to her beloved mother-in-law, "Your God shall be my God, &c." each of these ladies, though they loved each other with sisterly affection, **persisted, unchanged,** in their different ideas of religion.

The Baron de Somerville died of a malignant fever, but a few months before his wife, leaving her an only daughter, which Lady Elizabeth Grey loved as her own.

When Lady de Somerville was on her death bed, she presented the little charge to her friend; saying—"Oh, my Elizabeth! dear companion of my youth! to

you I bequeath this treasure. No one will love her like you, when I am no more. In you she will find a second mother."

Lady Elizabeth, immediately on the death of its only surviving parent, took the child to her house; and, during the early period of childhood, the surviving relatives indulged her in the pleasure of performing the office of friendship she so maternally fulfilled, in compliance with the injunctions of her dying friend. All the remaining kindred of Lady de Somerville were, however, sincerely attached to the reformed religion; and, as the child became capable of reasoning, they did all in their power to detach her from a bigoted Catholic. But the young Lady Elwina de Somerville loved her nominal mother with sincere affection, and could

not endure the thoughts of a separation.

Her relations, though powerful by their alliances, and the ample fortunes they possessed, were yet not strong enough to gain their cause against the known favourite, and almost acknowledged wife of Edward; who, himself, came forward to urge the validity and importance of a death-bed injunction. In vain was the plea of that religion alleged, which the dying Lady de Somerville had urged all who surrounded her couch in her dying moments to be careful, as they expected the blessing of Heaven, to instil into the mind of her child, in all the principles of that simple purity which she herself had professed during her life. How could this important task be fulfilled, while continually in the habit of witnessing superstitious rites, the most gross and absurd,

practised by her beloved protectress? whose every action, accompanied with dignity and beauty, could not fail of appearing amiable in the eyes of her grateful little charge.

The virtue of her mother, immaculate as new fallen snow, entreated her friend to teach her daughter the highest reverence for female chastity; and to look on it as the greatest ornament a female can boast.

“How then,” said one of her spirited friends, in the House of Peers, “can she be in love with this most valuable jewel, when she, to whom she is to look up, as the guide and guardian of her tender years, lives the distinguished mistress of a mighty prince, who is already betrothed to another?”

But vain were all the pleadings of Lady

Elwina's relations. The Cardinal of Winchester, ever the firm defender of Lady Elizabeth Grey, now came forward, and, drawing over a number of lords to his party, who wished to gain the favour of Edward, and having also the new ministry on his side, the Lady Elwina was adjudged, during her minority, to remain under the guardianship of Lady Elizabeth Grey.

Exhausted with the pressure of public affairs, and the effects of his many irregularities in early life; Lovelace, whose abilities and intrigues, in political and domestic circles, had rendered him the theme of every conversation, and whose present important situation in the ministry made him regarded with a mixture of fear and hope, was attacked with a disorder which seemed to baffle the skill of the



ablest physicians, but which, in their numerous consultations, they generally agreed must soon prove fatal to him.

But no one dared to tell Edward of the danger of his beloved friend. They assured the prince that his indisposition was but trifling; and that retirement, for a short time, from the fatigues of state business, would soon restore him; while they counselled him to suffer Lord Howard, who was of the same principles with Lovelace, though without his abilities, to fill the office which he held, until his recovery.

Edward, now triumphing in the exaltation of his favourites, and fancying himself secure from all dissensions at home, that might endanger his crown, gave way to the natural bent of his mind—the love of pleasure; and again wooed dissipation

in every form. Devoted to Lady Elizabeth alone, amongst women, he built for her a sumptuous pavilion; a fairy palace of art and elegance; and, while the nation was drained of its wealth to support the expences of civil and of foreign wars; while a loyal people distressed themselves, by giving up a part of their substance, to support their prince, and pay the debts contracted through his prodigality; while modest worth and merit pined in indigence, "and poor misfortune felt the lash of vice;" he caused a stable to be erected, equal in gorgeous expence to that of ivory, which was built by the Emperor Caligula. Those barbarous times of cruelty and oppression were not free from the shafts of ridicule; and the wits and witlings of the age, as they revelled at the banquet, would give round their flowing cups,

Power superior to Justice.

"To the princely stable and the favourite *Grey mare*," the old and trite maxim, of such being the *better horse*, was long prior to those days ; and was applicable to the woman who completely governed the prince. And well might they compare their Edward's establishment to a *stable*, while ridiculing his expence, who passed his inebriate moments in the low company of horse dealers, prize-fighters, mimics, and buffoons.

The Princess Bona still continued to pine in obscurity : a deserted mistress, a bride affianced and neglected, no other prince could seek her in marriage. The tears she shed in solitude were supposed, by her enemies, to flow for the unfortunate Warwick ; and whenever she went into public, a momentary gaiety was construed into apathy, or the pleasing prospect of

having made some new conquest. Thus the most virtuous of her sex was stigmatized with the character of a female libertine.

This cruel calumny having reached her ears, she submitted to an impartial public a defence, which, from party intrigues, we are sorry to say, is irrecoverably lost. for Edward, aided by his female mentor, entirely suppressed its publication.

The confessor of Lady Elizabeth, bribed by the golden lure which she held out to him, and which was to be the reward of his artful machinations, contrived to urge fresh reasons for Edward's aversion to the princess. No art was left untried to blacken her character, traduce her personal charms, depreciate her exalted virtue, and call her moral purity, the effect of native coldness or consummate hypocrisy.

Edward, who never really loved her, was now become too much the infatuated slave of Lady Elizabeth Grey, and his mind too much vitiated, by continued licentiousness, to harbour a virtuous attachment. As years rolled over his head, the nation saw, with heartfelt sorrow, no hopes of that reform, which they vainly flattered themselves might succeed to the ardent season of youth. The alienation of their affection became the result: and the young, though deep penetrating and thoughtful Earl of Richmond, built his virtuous foundation on the vices and follies of the house of York.

A Character.

CHAP. XX.

A CHARACTER.

From his cradle he was a scholar,
 And a ripe and good one ;
 Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading ;
 Lofty and sour to them who lov'd him not.
 But to those men that sought him,
 Sweet as summer.

SHAKESPEARE.

HENRY, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII. had full right, according to the claims of Lancaster, by his mother's side, to the English throne. When yet a youth, he had captivated the affections of Henry VI. ; who, it is said,

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had solemnly blessed the lad, and prophesied that it was he who should restore peace and unanimity to the wrangling houses of York and Lancaster.

The young Richmond certainly evinced a profundity of wisdom, unusual at his early age; and, self-advised and deeply contemplating, had pondered over his claims, and found his title to the crown was equally legal with that of the predecessors of his family. He was in a direct line from her, the celebrated and beauteous French princess, Katharine, who had been espoused to the sweetest prince England could ever boast, the darling of the soldiery, that scourge and conqueror of France, Henry V. Katherine, after she had become a widow, married a private Welch gentleman of the name of Tudor,

and Henry, Earl of Richmond, was her grandson by this second marriage.

Of a serious and reflective turn of mind, he studied the character of a people, that he was one day destined to govern. He saw their prevailing fault was, the love of money; he, therefore, determined, if ever he enjoyed the throne of his ancestors, to make it his first care to enrich the kingdom, as well as his own coffers. Unaddicted to those expensive pleasures, which, while they impoverish the possessor, render him unfit for public business, he calculated to a nicety those means, whereby a nation may increase its revenues, and become, in a manner, the bank of the whole world.

Accustoming himself early to study human nature, in all its mutability, he beheld that proneness in an English charac-

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ter, to discover the *mote* in a brother's eye, while a *beam* of magnitude obscured their own; and, so far from really possessing that firmness, for which, from the exalted and determined character of a few individuals, they had been erroneously famed, they were the most ready, of any people in the world, to be led astray by the force of example. Ever wavering, except in one respect, the fixed love of accumulating wealth; knowing how easily it procured them access in the higher circles; they eagerly adopted every ridiculous custom, and every fashionable vice, for which their superiors, in rank, might be celebrated. The higher, then, the elevation of any one, this wise prince justly considered, so much the more conspicuous should be his moral conduct.

If he avoided expence and show, his subjects might brand him with the fault of avarice. He heeded it not. To follow their prince's example, it would render them more careful of that wealth which would enrich the country; and enable him, by drawing a small part from them, by moderate taxes, to carry on those foreign wars which might be necessary to ensure the safety of his throne, and forward his commercial interests. By an unaffected regard to his religious duties; by being the faithful husband of one wife; and by avoiding to retain about his court and person, intriguing mistresses or mercenary favourites; he would set an example of moral rectitude. And if England, by such a conduct in her prince and people, was not so delighted and joyous as a nation, she would, at least, become tranquil and content.

Cool, determined, and resolute, he possessed all the qualifications requisite to render him a distinguished warrior. Chaste and temperate, his hardy constitution enabled him cheerfully to endure those privations, which the most rigid abstinence might, in the hard chances of war, inflict upon him. Patient under sufferings, though indignant of affronts ; his courage, aided by his deliberation, prompted him to resent any injury with spirit and resolution, without descending to the rash and ungentlemanlike conduct of a blind and savage revenge. No one knew so well how to draw the proper line between the virtues and those vices which are ever attached to them. His determined conduct was, therefore, devoid of obstinacy ; his courage from rashness ; his ardour in

battle from cruelty; his abstinence from rigidity; his gravity from moroseness; and his religion from enthusiasm or fanatic hypocrisy.

Resolved to maintain his just rights, or expire in the field of honour, he was possessed of that undaunted valour, so necessary to the character of a true soldier; while he studied, during his minority, before his great talents were called into action, that theory, and those stratagems of war, which form and distinguish a great and renowned general.

With all these warlike qualifications, he well knew there was nothing promoted the happiness and welfare of a commercial nation, like England, so much as peace; but if that peace was not honourable for her, it was never likely to be either permanent or happy. If once he could see her settled on the fixed basis of

a peace, which had the appearance of being lasting, it was his settled proposal to send a few hardy adventurers on the discoveries of distant lands; increase the wealth of the kingdom, and extend its commerce, by establishing colonies abroad.

History shews us how well he performed this wise resolution, when he came to the throne : for the following places were discovered during his reign,—The Cape of Good Hope; the East Indies; Florida; Jamaica; Porto Rico; Trinidad; Newfoundland; and the island of Madagascar.

He resolved also on promoting arts and learning at home, by every encouragement and reward : and, though he has been unjustly represented as an avaricious prince, no expence was spared by him to promote the interests and welfare of his country.

He lavished not his money on sensual pleasures, nor to gratify the vices and caprice of a few favoured minions ; but he enriched his kingdom, rendered it flourishing and happy, and left it in all the comforts and enjoyments of commercial ease ; and continually improving in arts and learning. To what a perfection the architectural art had become in his reign, that beautiful monument of it serves to prove, the chapel in Westminster abbey, built in his time, called Henry the VIIth's chapel.

To the height that learning had arrived, his own son gave a convincing proof ; who, in regard to mental accomplishments, was the most skilled in literature and polite acquirements, of any prince that had before swayed the English sceptre,

But the whole study of Henry the VIIth

in his pupilage, seems to have had but one end in view ; and that actuated by the most glorious of all emulation—TO BECOME ONE DAY, A GREAT AND GOOD KING !

When such principles as he was possessed of, united themselves to the deepest political abilities ; and in that unison opposed their unrivalled force against the futility, licentiousness, and prodigality, which tarnished all the virtues of the branches of the house of York ; it is not to be wondered at, that an over-ruling power should favour the design, in which the happiness and welfare of nations, yet unborn, was so materially concerned.

In the perusal of history, the world, in general, are too apt to attend to a partial character given by, perhaps, an offended monkish writer, where the king was not

blindly attached to the outward mummies of popery : or a puritanical reformist, who beheld no benign or moral duties in a prince, because he strictly followed the religion of his ancestors. The eye, as it glances over the pages of history, should carefully avoid being dazzled by the glitter of a superficial character ; and, while it delights to dwell on facts alone, let it observe how a nation is rendered happy, how little or how much it is oppressed, before it shuts itself on a prince's vices or virtues, to follow the opinions of a partial historiographer.

Writers who depreciate Henry VII. can find no vices in him but parsimony and the fear of losing his crown. He was obliged to be parsimonious ; he found the kingdom wretchedly poor, he left it, the seat of wealth and honour !

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His vigilance in preserving a crown, which sat but loosely on his head, has been stigmatized with the appellation of the fear of losing it. No! he had gained it; and determined to preserve his right to it, against enemies of the York party, who determined, if possible, to pluck it from his brow; and his own wife, and her mother, were the most inveterate of his enemies, and the most inclined to dethrone him. He has been blamed for his severity to the mother, and his want of affection to the daughter. The Queen Dowager was a plotting, ambitious woman, who stirred up various impostors to hurl Richmond from that throne he had so courageously obtained. In such despotic times, the king could not be blamed for confining her, when discovered, in a convent, for life. Nor could

he possibly feel affection for that wife, who eagerly entered into every plot against him; whom he had married in part, from political, though from laudable motives, chiefly to prevent a farther effusion of blood between two families, whom it is difficult to pronounce, which had the first and greatest claim to the throne of England.

This digression from the present plan of this History, we hope, will be pardoned. The follies and vices of Edward, only rendered Richmond more awake to improve his own conduct; and to raise himself to that regal power he, perhaps, would not otherwise have thought of. A great author has justly remarked, that the worst prospects often end in the fairest realities; and, by Richmond laying the plan of uniting the houses of York and Lancaster, he

laid the foundation of England's happiness. While a nation mourned the follies of one prince, and the crimes of his successor's short reign; a monarch was in store who would bring wealth, wisdom, and splendor to a grateful people; who would extend her dominions, and leave her in peace and affluence.— Thus often is it proved, that,

- “ The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
- “ Puzzled with mazes, and perplex'd with errors;
- “ Our understanding searches them in vain,
- “ Nor sees with how much art the windings turn;
- “ Nor where the regular confusion ends.”

CHAP. XXI.**A MYSTERY.**

She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.

POPE'S HOMER.

THE abbess of a nunnery, in the county of Suffolk, had a near relation who belonged to the female part of the Duchess of York's household. The abbess, falling sick, was permitted to quit her seclusion for a time, to try change of air, and to avail herself of the advice of eminent physicians, residing near the metro-

polis. She frequently made excursions to the Tower, to visit her kinswoman, who had apartments in the palace; and so charmed the mother of Edward, by the polished ease and elegance of her manners, that she would frequently stop to converse with her, and was much gratified by the refined sense the abbess displayed, and the profundity of unaffected learning which she discovered.

One day the duchess requested her to grant her half an hour's private conversation; when, after some hesitation, and very visible agitation of mind, the royal mother of Edward addressed her religious guest as follows :

“ I am about to confide to you, Madam, a charge of the utmost importance. I have, upon enquiry, found that you

take pensioners into your convent, to receive their education."

The abbess bowed assent, and the duchess continued.

"In a remote apartment of this tower, is a beautiful child, dear to this heart, as though she were my own. I take the sole care of her present education; her future fortune heaven only knows! Her birth——"

Here the duchess paused.

"But why," uttered she hastily, and with some confusion, "should I treat you with half confidence?"

"Rest assured," said the abbess, "whatever confidence your highness may think me worthy of, will never, in the smallest instance, be abused."

“ I believe you,” said the duchess. “ Know, then, that her birth is not only noble, but royal ; and that my angel husband, as the last breath quivered on his lips, falteringly pronounced a blessing on his beloved Elfrida, then a helpless babe. Ah ! you know not the pangs the birth of that child has given to this heart, that loves her, if possible, with more than maternal tenderness. My beloved Richard, it is true, regarded her with the fondest partiality ; but MY VERY SOUL seems wrapped up in her, and her fate seems so interwoven with my own, and so entwined is she round my dearest affections, that all other ties, which bind us to each other, appear cold and deadened, when thought dwells on her as its object.”

Here the duchess wept ; but soon

recovering herself, resumed her discourse.

“ I said, my dear lady abbess, that I would not treat you with half confidence; yet I dare say no more in what relates to the little Elfrida; and I must desire you to observe, that, though educated in a nunnery, it is never my intention that she should take the veil. But I know not to whom I can confide the care of her education, which must be of rather a singular kind, excepting to you, who know so well, from the superior understanding and talents which you possess, to accord dignity with humility; and to inculcate a taste for grandeur with an habitual œconomy, which, perhaps, must be observed in future necessity.”

The abbess, who saw that the education

of this royal *protégé* would be rather an arduous undertaking, said, "Your highness is pleased to over-rate my poor abilities, and——"

"Oh!" said the duchess, interrupting her, "object not, I beseech you, to my request. To you alone, to your prudential care, can I 'entrust this lovely blossom, and the finishing of that education which hitherto I have taken the charge of, but which, from various concurring circumstances, and from want of ability in some matters, I am unable to finish. Besides, her health may be injured in the concealment I find it necessary to observe on her account; and her mind may become morose by a seclusion from society. I have observed her character with that precision which I wish you to adopt.

Majesty seems inherent in her; she moves with peculiar dignity; and, while her heart seems generous and compassionate, pride appears so predominant a feature in her disposition, that it greatly alarms me. I wish her never to know who she really is; and yet, if, by your wise instructions, that pride could properly be kept in due bounds, I would desire her by no means to imagine herself descended from obscure or ignoble parents. Yet, oh! she must conquer this haughtiness of deportment, for she will not be rich. Therefore, while you educate her to possess every elegant and brilliant accomplishment, she must be taught every household duty, every plan of œconomy in domestic concerns. This part of education I am little adequate to; but the lay sisters of your convent must carefully attend to her im-

provement in those offices, which we, by birth and foolish prejudice, are too apt to think menial and degrading. Teach her, then, my dear madam, to unite the character of the high-born gentlewoman with that of the meritorious and diligent housewife: for what her future lot in life may be, I know not. Oh! if she should ever rise, acknowledged, to that pinnacle of earthly grandeur she is born to; then will all the high accomplishments you shall teach her, make her shine in those circles, which will derive their consequence from her presence. Should that descent of fate attend her, which I dare not shew myself too strenuous to avert from her; should her future lot in life be only that of the wife of an honest and plain English yeoman, then will her industry and œconomy, while I will take care, living or

dying, to insure her the bare comforts of life, procure her a comfortable and easy competency in obscurity ; in which state, perhaps, is found more real happiness than we, who glitter, envied in a court, can ever enjoy.

“ The re-establishment of my health, madam,” said the Abbess, “ and the ardent desire I feel, again to enter on the important duties of my profession, will oblige me to quit London to-morrow, for my conventual abode.”

“ If you go to day,” replied the duchess, with quickness, “ Elfrida is ready, and shall accompany you.”

“ I will call to-morrow, if your highness pleases,” replied the Abbess, “ and take your valued charge with me.”

“She henceforth becomes your’s,” said the duchess, “and to know her, is to value her! Farewell! till to-morrow, then.”

And she quitted the apartment, bathed in tears.

The next morning the Abbess went to the tower; and was struck, beyond her most ardent imagination, at the sight of Elfrida. A lovely, sylph-like form glided into the room; but with such an air of majesty, that seemed to claim a voluntary homage from all who beheld her. Her age appeared to have hardly told eleven years. Tall, and not too slender, grace and dignity gave an inexpressible charm to all her movements. Health and beauty bloomed on her cheek; and a profusion of flaxen ringlets played round

a face, which interested and inspired with respect all who beheld it. Her remarkable likeness to the family of York, gave the Abbess ample testimony of her being very nearly related to it. Yet she did not think her the daughter of him, who was his mother's darling, the highly favoured Edward; for she was less like him than any one of the family. Besides he entered the room, looked at Elfrida with, by no means, a parental fondness, but with frigid insensibility; and, with a supercilious sneer, he thus addressed his mother.

“ So, madam, you have then, at length, brought yourself to the wise resolution of parting with this, your proud little minion.”

“ Proud! echoed the little Elfrida,

“ I may be allowed some pride ; for there are kings, who hold their thrones on a very uncertain tenure, and yet they are proud ! ”

The Abbess was astonished at the quickness of this answer in so young a child, and rather judged it to be a lesson that had been previously given her ; and the turn of several expressions Elfrida continued to make use of, made her imagine her, to be some unacknowledged offspring of the house of Lancaster. But, then, her likeness to the family of York, and the great interest the duchess took in her fate, soon exploded that idea.

She had little time to indulge in reflection ; for, turning to look on Edward, she beheld his fine countenance

disfigured by rage, and in a voice, almost unintelligible with passion, he thus addressed his mother :

“ See, madam, howly wise you have acted ! how well you have preserved the secret intrusted to you, by divulging the high birth of her, who should have been the last to have heard of it.”

This Elfrida did not hear, having been drawn to the window, to observe the guards of the palace who were performing their military exercise.

“ My son,” said the Duchess of York, mildly addressing him, in a foreign language, “ I know not where she has learnt it ; never from me ; and very few, excepting myself, ever see her. My time has always been employed in those hours I devoted to her educa-

tion, in checking that pride, which I perceive to be her most predominant foible."

"Pardon my haste, madam," said the prince, respectfully bowing on the hand he took in his; "your tongue, the sure herald of truth, never can utter a word that will be discredited by me."

A close-covered litter now entered the court yard; and, with many tears and frequent embraces, the duchess took leave of her lovely *protégé*.

"Farewell, my dear protectress, my more than mother," said the weeping Elfrida, "farewell! when shall we meet again?"

"Oh soon, very soon, I faithfully promise you, my beloved treasure," said the duchess.

“A week will not elapse,” said Edward, smiling, “my good Lady Abbess, before you will behold my mother at the gate of your convent, looking after her little stray lamb—well, God bless you, Elfrida.”

“My dear, kind duchess, the only mother I ever knew, has always told me,” said Elfrida, “that I must love my enemies, and God bless you, sir, though I believe you are mine.”

“You should say, *my liege*,” said one of the lords in waiting, who stood at the open door, which led to the great stair case, “when you speak to the king.”

“Never to that king, my lord,” said Elfrida, with determined dignity.

The Abbess lamented secretly the

trust that had been reposed in her. What shall I do, thought she, with this haughty and resolute child? But they had not proceeded half way on their journey, before her pupil had made a deep interest in her bosom, by the sweetness of her manners, the justness of her remarks, so superior to her years, and that candour and benignity, which were so happily blended with innate dignity.

Arrived at the interior of the nunnery, Sister Agatha, a talkative though excellent hearted nun, and who enjoyed all the unlimited confidence of her friend, the abbess, cried out, at the sight of the child—"Holy Saint Mary! Why, who have you got there? Is it the young Countess de Hainault, risen from the grave?

Why, she is as like to her as these two ringlets are to each other," continued she, twisting her fingers in the flowing hair of Elfrida, who looked at the nun with contempt; for her appearance was neither prepossessing nor clean, from the quantity of snuff she constantly took, and said to her, with quickness, drawing away her head, "Do you know who I am?"

"No, my pretty dear," said Agatha; "But I would venture to lay a good sum, if I had it, that either the Duchess of Burgundy, or the sweet Countess de Hainault was——"

"Peace!" said the abbess; the last words of Sister Agatha having awakened an idea which had not occurred to her before. "See that dinner is prepared in the refectory, and attend me afterwards

in my cell; and there I will teach you, if I can possibly accomplish such an hydra-like labour, how necessary it is for you to hold your tongue, as far as in what relates to the young pensioner I have brought home with me."

Agatha, who adored the superior, though she found to be silent, on any occasion, was a very difficult task, yet religiously kept herself so in regard to whatever might throw the least light on the birth of this extraordinary child; to whom, however, in spite of the Duchess of York's vigilance, somebody about the palace had been imprudent enough to impart all that could add to her natural pride, while they had concealed those obstacles which would, infallibly, prevent her from shining in that high sphere, for

which they fondly imagined her to be designed.

The good natured Agatha could never endure to see her employed in making up linen for the nunnery, or in preparing cakes and confections for their gala days; but used to keep her close by her, while she performed those lower offices; and would employ Elfrida in the more honourable avocation of gilding a crown for Saint Catherine, or adorning the image of the Virgin with wreaths of flowers. The linen was found to be sewed very neat, the flavour of the sweetmeats was extolled, while Agatha enjoyed the praises bestowed on the blushing Elfrida; whose mind, being the seat of real dignity, could no longer support those applauses which she was conscious she did not merit, and

insisted on performing every task that was allotted her. By degrees her *hauteur* wore off, and a sweet and dignified affability took place of it.

When first she went to the convent, in her little altercations with her companions, she would say—"You know not whom you offend!"

This pride Agatha constantly fed, by saying—"No, that they do not, or they would not dare to do it."

But, as she grew older, her thoughtful mind, pondering on the wise counsels of the abbess, saw how little advantage was to be derived from a splendid birth, where want of fortune, and an overshadowing mystery, appeared as barriers to future dignity.

In the abbess she saw a wise and

maternal friend; and, though she loved Agatha for the goodness of her heart, and for her sincere affection towards her, yet she beheld her ignorant, the slave of prejudice, and of superstition.

Spirit, and tempered dignity, had now succeeded to childish petulance; and her youthful vivacity was so checked by a kind of serious majesty in her deportment, that it overawed her companions, and took from them the power or the wish to offend her.

The affection of the abbess increased for her every day; while the Duchess of York, peculiarly happy in having placed her with so excellent a monitress, endowed the nunnery with rich gifts, and increased its revenues. Unchanged in

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her affection to her amiable and interesting *protégé*, she beheld her, each time, with added delight, and separated from her, after their frequent meetings, with the keenest regret.

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